

DOVETON



VOL. III.

D O V E T O N ;

OR,

THE MAN OF MANY IMPULSES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JERNINGHAM."

"I speak
Of what I know and what we feel within."
WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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VOL. III.

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DOVETON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FITTING ON OF THE GLASS SLIPPER.

"I have attained and now I may depart."

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

BEFORE any single member of my family had appeared in the lower regions of our house, I had found my way, on the following morning, to Meadow-bank. My father was the first to welcome me. In his dressing-gown and slippers, he came rushing into the drawing-room, and whilst his eyes glistened with tears, and his voice faltered with emotion, he threw his arms around my

neck, and blessed me. "My poor boy! my Gerard!—how overjoyed I am to see you—and you have prospered too; wherever you have wandered, the good qualities of your nature have been triumphant, and have been nobly rewarded. I thought that the world would do you justice. I thought that friendship, would smile upon you, and love caress you, my Gerard. And how long do you intend to stay amongst us?—*A month.* What, only a month! and you are engaged all this time to Sir Reginald Euston."

"Oh! but I shall often see you.—But tell me, how is my mother, and how is Arthur, and how are my sisters!"

"All well—all very well, Gerard; but now, do tell me more about yourself."

And then, at the request of my father, I began to indulge in a little pleasurable egotism. I spoke of my uncle's great kindness to me, and of Anstruther's singular attachment toward me. I told of him of my adventure at Croydon fair, and, indeed, of almost all that I had done, except the perpetration of my novel, and upon this subject I was scrupulously silent. I had a motive for acting as I did—that motive was not a very virtuous one, for it was a mixture of vanity and pride. I little thought that my desire would be very speedily fulfilled; but so it happened that I tarried not long for its fulfilment.

“ Shall I soon see my mother ? ” I asked.

“ I doubt it, Gerard ; she signified her intention, last night, of breakfasting in her chamber. She sate up very late, indeed, to finish a book which she declared it to be actually impossible to lay down. I never knew her so interested in my life ; she is not a great reader, you know ; but nothing could tear her from this book. The girls, too, are quite mad about it ; and Arthur, declares it to be the most ‘ bang-up thing ’ he ever read in his life.”

“ A novel, I suppose—.”

“ Yes,—a novel.”

“ And the name of it ? ”

“ *DRAYTON, THE DREAMER.* ”

I will not attempt to describe what I felt upon hearing this announcement. And they had actually read my book in utter ignorance of its author ! This was what I desired ; unprejudiced, they had read it, and with one accord they had pronounced a verdict in its favour. My sisters had wept, and Arthur had gloated, over it ; and my mother had been so absorbed in its perusal, that she had denied herself many hours of her accustomed sleep, an event almost unparalleled in the history of my mother’s life. Was not this a triumph ? I was exceeding proud, and I began to think of the means whereby I might divulge my important secret, with the greatest possible effect. I already

had waited long enough; that which I had so long desired was now thoroughly accomplished. Unwittingly my mother and my sisters had acknowledged my claims, and I was satisfied. They could not now revoke their sentence. "The despised one," I said inwardly, "is triumphant."

And my sisters presented themselves at breakfast. They asked me many questions, relating to the goings-on of the metropolitan world; whether I had seen the King, the Lord Chancellor, Mr. Fauntleroy, and Daniel O'Connell; whether bonnets were worn large or small; and whether Grosvenor Square was getting out of fashion. To all these interrogatories I responded very satisfactorily. I hate answering questions; yet I am very patient when they are asked.

"But have you read '*Drayton the Dreamer*?' " asked my younger sister, who aspired to be a Blue.

"Yes," I replied, with an air of indifference.

"And what do you think of it?"

"So-so; rather a trashy affair, but better than some I have read."

"Much you know about it," said my sister Laura, indignantly; "if you could write anything a hundredth part as good, you might think yourself a very clever fellow."

"Very likely," I responded, with a smile; "but I, you know, was always a dull one."

“ Oh, no !” said my father ; “ not a dull one—never a dull one.”

“ But what do they say,” asked my sister Fanny, “ about ‘ *Drayton the Dreamer*,’ in town ?”

“ Oh ! they say that it is tolerable ; but—”

“ But you have not comprehension enough, to analyze its beauties,” said one of my sisters.

“ Do you know who wrote it ?” asked the other.

“ Oh ! I’m sure that I should love the author, if I knew him,” cried both of the young ladies, in a breath.

“ I believe,” said I, “ that he is a very young man ; and, as such, we may hope better things from him.”

“ Better things !—nothing can be better, I am sure, than ‘ *Drayton the Dreamer*.’”

“ But don’t you know his name ?” asked my sister Laura ; “ you ought to know it ; for he has dedicated his book to your friend, Mr. Edwin Anstruther.”

“ This last sentence was rather an embarrassing one ; I did not know what to answer ; and I stammered when I made the attempt.—“ I have heard it—but I don’t know—that is to say, I have forgotten it.”

My time had not yet arrived ; my harvest was not ready for the sickle.

Breakfast over, my mother made her appearance with the last volume of my book in her hand. She

seemed, like my two sisters, disposed to talk upon no other subject, and wound up a long critical discourse, with "Oh! how proud I should be, if one of *my* sons could write such a book!"

"And who knows, but that one of them may?" said my father, glancing significantly at me.

"Stuff!" ejaculated my mother; "and yet they do say that dear Arthur gets on marvellously at Eton. He was 'shown up for good,' as they call it, and got five shillings for his verses."

I smiled; and then turning to my father, I inquired after his Marston, which had now been many years on the stocks, and which still, I believed, was incomplete.

"I am at a stand-still," replied my father, "for want of a copy of the *Malcontent*; and I have not got the original editions of the Satires."

"Oh!" I exclaimed in accents of joy; "the deficiency will soon be repaired;—my good friend, Mr. Anstruther, thinking that you might need them, has sent you a complete set of John Marston's works, and respectfully begs your acceptance of them. Plays, satires, everything he has written; I have got them for you at the Hall."

"Oh! how very good of him," cried my father, his eyes glistening with joy as he spoke; and he would have added more, had not my mother interrupting him, exclaiming,

"I think it would have been better had he sent

something of more use to us all than a number of old, musty plays, which no one but your father will look into."

I was very much hurt by the selfishness and delicacy of this observation. I blushed for my mother, but I was scrupulously silent. My father turned aside his head, for he also was much wounded by the remark. My sisters, however, appeared to sympathize with the feelings of their mother. There was a silence; but Mrs. Doveton did not suffer it to endure very long, for presently she said to me, "By the bye, what sort of a man is this Mr. Anstruther of yours?"

"Is he handsome?" asked my elder sister.

"Is he a man of genius?" asked the younger.

"He is both," said I.

"And rich?" asked my mother.

"Yes, very."

"And he has no children?"

I had a suspicion that I was not uttering the truth when I replied to this question, "None."

"He is a widower, I think," said my mother; "do you know whether the estates are entailed?"

"I don't think that they are, and yet I am not sure;—on second thoughts, I think that they may be."

"This is one of your explicit answers," returned my mother in her peculiar sarcastic voice, "for which you are so famous, Gerard, and have been

even since you were a child. One would have thought that any body but yourself would have inquired into these affairs the first thing. You don't know what a chance you are letting slip,—now do rouse yourself a little. Fortune seems disposed to smile upon you, and yet you turn a deaf ear to her advances. I should not wonder that, if you were to *try hard*, Mr. Anstruther would make you his heir. By the bye, Gerard, don't you think that you could get him to invite dear Arthur to spend his next holidays at Charlton Abbey."

"I could get him to do anything that I desire," said I, endeavouring with all my might to stifle my just indignation.

"Then do put in a word or two for Arthur;—*do*, there's a good boy."

"But where is Arthur?" said I.

"He went off on a shooting expedition before it was light," returned my mother. "He *would* go,—nothing could persuade him to give it up, though I begged and prayed him to stay at home. I do so hate those horrid fire-arms; I am always so afraid of their bursting."

At this moment, one of our maid-servants entered the room, bringing with her a small parcel for me. It was from Anstruther: it had just arrived at the Hall, and Sir Reginald had forwarded it to me by one of his grooms. I knew the hand-writing of the superscription; but as I had only left Charlton

Abbey on the preceding morning, it appeared strange to me that I should thus early receive a communication from my generous friend. "What have you got there?" asked my mother.

"A parcel from Mr. Anstruther," I replied.

"Most likely something or other you have left behind you," said Mrs. Doveton. "I never yet knew you set out upon a journey without leaving something behind."

This was very true; and it was very probable, indeed, that my mother's surmises were correct. "I dare say," said I, "that you are right, and that this parcel contains something that I have forgotten."

A little thing excites the curiosity of a woman; and my mother and sisters were not the least curious of their sex. I could plainly see that they were intensely desirous to witness the opening of my parcel; and as I had no wish to disappoint their expectations, I broke the seals, cut the string asunder, and had soon satisfied the curiosity of the party, and discovered the fallacy of my mother's conjectures.

"It is only a parcel of magazines, after all," exclaimed my mother, with an air of disappointment.

"Is the *Magazin des Modès* there?" inquired my elder sister.

I smiled at my sister's French, and said, "I should think not." Then tearing open the letter,

which accompanied the parcel; I read that which caused the pulses of my heart to throb with unwonted rapidity, and my whole frame to thrill with intensest emotion. "My hour has come, at last," I soliloquized. "I have triumphed; and now my triumph shall be manifested."

I opened one of the magazines, and said, addressing myself to my mother, in a voice slightly tremulous with excitement, "You were talking about '*Drayton the Dreamer*,'—should you like to see *a portrait of the author*?"

"Oh, yes!—very much, indeed!—pray show it to me—I am dying to see it;—quick, there's a good boy!"

And my sisters echoed the words of their mother: they were all "dying" to see the portrait of him who wrote "*Drayton the Dreamer*." But had I such a portrait to show them? *I had*. At Anstruther's request, I had sat to an artist for my picture. It was a full-length portrait, and an admirable likeness. Anstruther cherished it more than all his jewels of art.

He had caused it to be engraved;—this I knew not;—and mainly through his interest, I conjecture, the engraving had just made its appearance as one of a "*Gallery of Literary Portraits*," embellishing the ——— Magazine.

The magazines did not arrive at Charlton Abbey

till some hours after my departure, but Anstruther had forwarded them immediately by the mail.

"Oh! do let us see the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*," cried my mother and both of my sisters, in a breath.

"I have pictured him to my mind's-eye," said my sister Laura, "as a beautiful youth, with long flowing hair, and a Byron-like expression of countenance."

"Then, I fear, you will be disappointed," said I; "for he is almost as ugly as I am."

"It is impossible that he should be ugly," returned Laura; "there must be 'the mind, the music breathing from his face,' as Byron says."

"No more mind, and no more music, than there is to be seen in mine," I replied.

"But why don't you let us judge for ourselves?" asked my mother, extending her hand for the magazine.

"Because you will be disappointed when you see it. The actual falls far short of the ideal."

"Oh! never mind; we will take our chance, and we will not blame you for dispersing the illusion."

"Well, then, you *shall* see it. Behold the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*!"

And as I said this, I threw myself into the attitude which the artist had chosen for my picture.

I wore precisely the same style of dress as in the portrait; so that there was nothing to mar the excellence of the likeness. "Now, mother, look at the author of *Drayton the Dreamer* and then look at your son!"

My mother took the book into her hand. — "Why, Gerard, it's like you!—it has your nose, your forehead, your mouth.—How very strange!—It has hair, too, like yours; it has—"

"Look at me, mother."

And my mother *did* look at me. "Why, Gerard, it is just your attitude—your everything—it is, it must be, yet no; it cannot be. Oh! it is your picture."

"Gerard's picture!" and my sisters started up, and looking over the shoulder of their mother, they glanced at me, and then at the picture, and said, "It is wonderfully like."

"What does all this mean?" asked my father.

I continued in my old attitude, and smiled. My father rose from his seat, and he also looked at the picture. He doubted not for one moment. His heart did not misgive him. He believed what he desired to be true; and was convinced, at once, that he beheld in his son the original of the portrait, before him—the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*.

He burst into a flood of tears, and threw his

arms around my neck. "Oh! Gerard, it is your picture, and you are he—the author of the book. I always thought that you had genius. I always thought that you would, some day or other, be a shining light in the world. I knew that I should have reason to be proud of you—but why were you so secret? Could you not confide in your poor father? Could you not have unburdened yourself to me?"

"Or, to me?" said my mother, with a sigh, the meaning of which I knew not how to interpret.

"But, are you *really* the author of *Drayton the Dreamer*?" asked my sister Laura; "it is certainly an extraordinary resemblance, a very extraordinary resemblance, indeed,—but such things have been, before now, and—— but just move your hand, mamma, there is an autograph under the portrait."

"And what name does it character?" I asked, with a triumphant look of exultation on my face.

My father snatched the book from the hand of his wife, and as he glanced at the autograph, he answered my question. "Whose name is written there?" I asked.

"The name of GERARD DOVETON—*my son*."

I arose from my seat, and walked towards the window. I knew not whether I was happy, or was miserable. Of a certainty, I had triumphed

gloriously; but a kind heart delighteth not in triumph; and now, many bitter reminiscences rushed, with a sickening influence, upon my soul, and I reproached myself for my long-abiding reserve—my mistrust—my evil-minded vindictiveness—and all the vile cravings of my mortified vanity. I thought how much better it would have been, if I had confided my cherished hopes to my parents, and suffered them to sympathize with their son. The kind reproaches of my father unmanned me: I felt that I had treated him with scorn, and ingratitude—that I ought to have confided my secret to him, if to none beside, and thinking of these things, I was exceeding sorrowful, and I turned my face towards the window, and wept.

“Gerard, Gerard,” said my mother, “now tell me all about your book.”

I wiped away my tears, and walked toward the sofa, on which my mother was sitting. I sat down beside her, and taking one of her hands into mine, I kissed her upon the cheek, and said, “Forgive me; I have been very wrong. indeed; I ought to have had no secrets from my parents. But I was proud, and I thought that I might fail, and, if I succeeded, I was anxious that my success should burst suddenly upon you, my mother. I am sure that you must rejoice in that success—do you not? Now tell me, are you happy—happy

in the exaltation of your son? Love me, mother, love me very much; for fame is nothing worth, without love."

"Have I not always loved you?" asked my mother.

Alas! I could not answer "Yes!"

CHAPTER II.

THE PALSY-STRICKEN.

“ Tell us,
How parted she from life.”

FORD:

No sleep, was e'er like this—no trance, no fainting !
Those white and rigid lips—those dreadful eye-balls—
All prove that death is here ———,
For every vital thing in the universe,
Is quite unlike it ———.”

HORNE'S *Cosmo de' Medici*.

LEAVING Meadow-bank, I proceeded with a beating heart, towards the cottage in Grass-hill lane. As I went along, many painful misgivings floated, cloud-like, over the serenity of my mind. I thought of the disclosure that I had undertaken to make, and I feared that I was bound upon a perilous adventure. It was not possible to conceive, that a woman, with the strong feelings of Mrs. Moore, could receive the intelligence that I was about to

communicate with any other than over-whelming emotions. To know that the history of her infamy was familiar to me, who for many years had regarded her as a pattern of morality, could not fail of exciting within her a host of painful sensations: but, that her story should be made known unto the world, and that her own daughter should be called upon to pardon the delinquencies of an offending mother; that after long years of obscurity, she should be dragged as a culprit before the world, and all the desolating reminiscences of her past guilt be re-awakened suddenly. Oh! indeed I thought that it would be better for her to die, as she had lived, in her humble seclusion.

I dreaded the disclosure that I was about to make, and I resolved, as long as it was possible, to delay it. It is a fine thing to be able to defer the accomplishment of that which is painful. I thought so, at least, as I went along, thanking God that the time had not arrived for the execution of the plans that had been formed by Sir Reginald Euston and myself. He was to perform his part of the engagement first, and this was a marvellous solace to me. "I will think nothing more of this to-day," I thought: "I will visit them as though I were still abiding in the ignorance of by-gone years."

But, having cast out this fear, another took

possession of my boding mind. Thinking of Ella, it flashed upon my memory that she was no longer a child, and that if Mrs. Moore performed her duty, she would forbid my visits to the cottage. Indeed, the widow-woman, before my departure for the metropolis, had alluded, more than once, to the strange position in which we were situated with regard to one another; and I often marvelled that she had suffered our familiarity to endure so many years. I was no sophist.—I could not persuade myself that, if Mrs. Moore were to say to me, “Mr. Doveton, this ought not to be,” I should be able, with a clear conscience, to answer, “I think that it ought.” I knew that my intentions were honest, but out of the purest soil often spring many evil weeds; and I felt that I was treading a path of danger, more dangerous to my beloved than to myself; for man escapes often, when woman sinks, and these reflexions filled me with painful incertitude. I thought of what Smith had said to me, and I acknowledged that, in part, he was right. But what was I to do? I could not cease to love, but I might abstain from the society of the loved one. •It was my duty to do so, and in accordance with the claims of duty, I was now resolute to act. But not duty alone, but love supporting duty, imperatively called upon me to adopt a line of conduct, widely different from what I had

hitherto adopted. I resolved to obey principle, not impulse; to make present enjoyment succumb to ultimate good; to cast out all selfishness from my nature, and, hoping for a happy consummation of my labours, steadily to pursue a predetermined path, and to suffer nothing to tempt me into a digression. “Yes,” I said, “it will be wiser, better, kinder, to deny myself for a season. Shall I do ought to injure my Ella? We may be honest, pure, innocent, but there are evil-minded people in the world, — babblers, who will say strange things of us; and they will try to cast a stain upon the spotless character of the cottage maiden, mixing up her name with mine, and pointing at us; this never must be.—‘Pure as snow, and chaste as ice, ye shall not escape calumny.’”

Thinking of these things, as I passed along Grass-hill lane, I was aroused from my meditations, by the ringing noise of a horse’s hoofs close behind me, striking rapidly upon the hard, frosty ground. I stood still; and saw that the horseman, was no other than the village apothecary. As he passed me, he recognized my person, and uttered a few words, of which I caught only the name of Mrs. Moore, for he did not slacken his pace, and almost instantly he had galloped out of hearing. “What can this be!” I said. “Pray

God that disease has not entered the cottage of the widow-woman."

So I quickened my pace, and in a few minutes I was within sight of the widow-woman's abode. I trembled with all the nervousness of anticipated evil, as I beheld the apothecary's horse, tied to the little wicket gate, through which I had so often passed with a heart fluttering with more pleasurable sensations, than those which now vibrated in my soul. What could it be? Was the widow-woman dying? Or, had some frightful visitation come suddenly upon Michael and Ella.

I passed the gate, and at the threshold of the cottage-door, I met a strange woman, whom almost breathless with excitement, I accosted, and asked, "What is the matter?" She looked at me and recognizing my face, for she was a charwoman and had seen me at Meadow-bank, she replied, "Oh! Mr. Doveton—your name was the last word she spoke."

"Good God!" I exclaimed, "you don't mean to tell me that Ella Moore is dead?"

Knowing that there was evil, my imagination had conjured up the extreme of misery, and I had asked this question, though there was no reason why I should have thought that the words of the charwoman related to *her*. I always apprehended the extremes of misery, whenever I knew that there was any evil to be dreaded. I had rarely

any half-fears ; and I always expected my sorrows to come upon me, not singly, but in battalions.

“ You do not mean to tell me that Ella Moore is dead ?” I exclaimed, gaspingly.

“ Oh, no !—not Ella—Mrs. Moore ; but no one is dead, sir.”

“ What is the matter, then ?—quick !—tell me ;—for God’s sake, speak !”

“ Mrs. Moore, sir, is going off in a fit — a palsy fit ; it’s horrid to see her. I don’t think that she would quite know you now, sir ; but she wanted you a little time ago.”

“ Are Michael and Ella with their mother ?”

“ Michael and Ella, sir !—oh, no !—they are both gone away,” replied the woman.

“ *Gone !—Gone where ?* This is dreadful ! I don’t know what it is ; but I’m sure that something horrible has happened. • Go, and tell the doctor that I wish to see him ; and ask him whether I may go into the room.”

“ Michael and Ella gone !” I muttered to myself : “ and the Widow Moore in a palsy fit ! I have come in time to hear fearful tidings.”

The apothecary came out to speak with me.—“ Oh, doctor ! what means all this ?—something horrible !—but tell me the worst ; I can bear it. I can, indeed ; for certainty is better than suspense.”

“ I scarcely know myself,” returned the apothecary.

cary; "there is a mystery here, difficult to fathom. Mrs. Moore has been struck with paralysis, and small chance is there that she will survive the day: the sun will surely set upon a corpse."

"But, her children!" I interrupted eagerly; "her children,—where are they gone?"

"I cannot tell you; I am ignorant as yourself. I was summoned about an hour ago to the poor woman's bed-side, and I have just arrived here, as you know. Neither son nor daughter are in the cottage; but perhaps they know not of their mother's affliction, and are not very far from home."

"I fear that they are, sir; but this woman can tell us; perhaps she knows more than we do.—Here, my good woman; when did they—I mean Michael and Ella Moore,—when did they leave their mother? and how long has Mrs. Moore been ill?"

The woman was startled by the earnestness of my manner, and she did not immediately reply. "Can you not speak?" I said; "can you not tell me what you know? I ask but a simple question; can you not answer me? Where are they gone? where are Michael and Ella Moore gone, my good woman? I speak plainly enough; don't you understand what I say?"

And, at length, the woman replied, falteringly, "I don't know, sir; I do not, indeed."

"But *when* did they go? can you tell me that?"

"Yes, sir; they went yesterday."

"Together?"

"Yes, sir,—together; and Mrs. Moore sent for me to help her."

"And did she tell you nothing?"

"No, sir,—nothing. She has been in a sad taking ever since. She has scarcely opened her lips since I have been here, except once or twice, to say, 'I wish Gerard Doveton were here.'"

"Doctor, we must solve this: let us go to the widow, and ask her."

"Alas!" replied the apothecary, "she is speechless."

"This is dreadful!—we must remain in our suspense. This fearful incertitude will kill me. But suppose, doctor, that we go into her room, and see if we can discover any clue which may possibly guide us in our researches: a letter, perhaps; or, don't you think, that, peradventure, Mrs. Moore can write with her hand what she cannot utter with her lips?"

"Oh! no, sir; she is utterly powerless; her right side is fearfully distorted by the shock, and there is no hope that she can communicate with us. But you may enter with me; for, as you suggest, some clue or other might be discovered. But it is my business, you know, to think wholly of my patient; though I fear that very little can be done for her."

And saying this, the apothecary led me to the chamber of the palsy-stricken woman. What I beheld there, I will not attempt to describe. Such a wreck, such a hideous distortion, such a miserable ruin of a human face, struck as it were by the lightning of sudden disease, was seldom beheld, even by those who are habituated to horrible sights, and who are familiar with hospitals and lazaret-houses! In that fearfully distorted visage, no child would have known the face of his mother.

Yet she knew me—I saw at once that she knew me, and she struggled, but impotently, to speak. I heard a low gurgling in her throat—and her mouth, which was drawn awry by the palsy stroke was opened, but no accents escaped. Her eyes, which protruded redly from their sockets, rolled themselves towards the spot where I stood. Then, as I thought, she made an effort to uplift her hand, but she was powerless—there she lay upon the bed, a wretched mass of the most hopeless impotence.

I knew not what to do. It was plain that the one wish of the dying woman, was to address herself to me. But speechless, and almost motionless, as she was, all means of communication were shut out from her, and alas! it was too plain, that if she had aught to disclose, her secret must go down with her to the grave.

But my heart died within me, as I thought of this. I turned to the doctor, and said, in accents of despair, "What are we to do?—She has something on her mind, and yet it is utterly impossible that she should unburthen herself."

"Utterly impossible, Mr. Doveton."

"Do you think, doctor, that she can *hear*?"

"Beyond a doubt."

"Then, perhaps, I may lighten her agony;" and bending over the pillow of her bed, I continued in a slow, distinct voice, "Mrs. Moore, have no fear, I beseech you, on account of your children, for I will help them. Here, I promise you, and if I break that promise, may God visit me according to my deserts, that whilst I am suffered to abide in this world, they shall never lack one to help them—they shall never be friendless on the earth."

And the palsy-stricken woman heard me, for she again struggled to articulate; but again were her lips closed, without sending forth any accent more distinct than a low gurgle, which seemed to proceed from the lower cavities of her chest. I knelt down, beside her bed, and repeated my assurances of protection to her children; then I prayed for her poor soul, and my prayers seemed to afford her comfort, for she closed her eyes; and distorted as was her face, I thought that it wore an aspect of calmness.

But, presently her left hand, which lay without the coverlid of the bed, was moved backwards and forwards, and the fore-finger pointed out, as though she were endeavouring to trace something upon the sheet. The apothecary beheld this, and he whispered to me, "I think that she is endeavouring to write with her finger,—Watch;" and we did watch.

"Doctor, what word was that? Did you make out the letters, as she traced them?"

"I think so—that last word was *Lawrence*."

"So I thought, and '*my*'—'*my son*.'"

"Yes—I made that out plainly; but look—"

"Ah! that word was '*Michael*'—and—"

"Ella—'*Michael and Ella*.'"

"Yes—but what was that letter? I cannot make out what she writes."

"I think that the word was '*Paul*'"

"*Paul*!—what can that mean?—but look, doctor; '*Phil—Phillips*.'"

"'*Paul Phillips*.'"

"Yes, I think so—'*knows—knows all*.'"

"*Paul Phillips knows all*. I cannot tell the meaning of this. But look, now the hand is still."

"Oh! doctor, I think that she is dying—see how her frame is convulsed—can you do nothing? She would have written more, but now—— this

—horrible indeed, and those dreadful struggling efforts to articulate. Oh! doctor, what can we do?"

"Nothing, I fear, nothing; the spirit is passing away from her body."

It was indeed—but it passed not away gently, and it was a fearful thing, indeed, to witness the dying struggles of the palsy-stricken woman—the deadly throes, the convulsive paroxysms, the wrenched frame, the rolling eye upturned, the distorted features still more distorted. Oh! better are these things not described.

She died—and where, at this awful moment, were those who should have smoothed her dying pillow, even her own children—where were *they*? Michael and Ella, whither had they betaken themselves? Oh! passing strange seemed their absence to me.

I quitted the death-chamber and entered the little parlour, where I had so often sate listening to the widow, as she read aloud from her easy chair, the sweet moralities of Jeremy Taylor. I did not weep; but my eyes were hot and arid; I would have given the world for the power to shed a tear.

There was an open Bible lying upon the table; I took it into my hand, but I could not read. The letters seemed floating before my eyes, for

my brain was exceeding dizzy. * But I prayed—and the stream ‘flowed not from my heart without access of strength.’

I rose up, and I began to look around me, hoping that my eyes would alight upon something which might account for the strange absence of Michael and Ella from their home. I looked around me, but in vain, for all things appeared to be precisely in the situation, in which they were ever wont to have been, ere my departure from Meadow-bank. Despair entered my soul; I knew not what to do in this extremity.

Walking towards the door in utter hopelessness, I dashed my foot against something that was lying upon the ground. It was a book; mechanically I stooped down to lift it up. I knew it well, for it was the *Holy Living*.

I turned over its pages, I know not why, for I did not attempt to read, and a letter fell from the book, at my feet. I picked it up, and looking at the signature, I read the name of Lawrence Moore.

And instantly I accounted for the strange absence of Michael and Ella, from their home. Poor Larry, in sickness and in poverty, destitute and broken down, perhaps dying, had written to his mother for assistance, and Michael and Ella had gone forth to aid him. They had gone to London, for Larry had dated his letter from a

little tavern in the outskirts of the city; they had started, as it appeared, suddenly, and ere this, they had arrived at the metropolis.

I read Larry's letter. It was brief; but it told plainly enough the sad history of his destitution. Utterly without any further resources, after his abandonment of the equestrian players, he had subsisted, for some time, upon his slender professional earnings; but now, not only was he pennyless, but fever-stricken; and I almost feared that Michael and Ella would arrive too late to rescue their brother from death.

Taking Larry's letter with me, I quitted the cottage, and turned my footsteps towards the Hall. "And I, too, will set out for London;" I cried aloud, as I ascended the hill. "Yea; ere night-fall, I shall have started upon my journey."

My words were the language of truth. That night I set out for the metropolis.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARMING OF THE KNIGHT-ERRANT.

“ What fairer seal
 Shall I require to my authentic mission,
 Than this fierce energy—the instinct striving,
 Because its nature is to strive ?

* * * *

Is it for human will
 To institute such impulses ; still less
 To disregard their promptings ? ”

BROWNING.

BUT ere I started upon my journey, I took counsel with Sir Reginald Euston. The good baronet, grieved as he was by the thought of my sudden departure, applauded the generosity of my resolutions. “ Yes, go,” he said ; “ go, Gerard ; and God grant that your expedition may be successful.”

Then we spake of Lady Euston : Sir Reginald had not yet touched upon the subject of her rela-

tionship to the Widow Moore; and although he lamented the catastrophe that had so suddenly cut off the mother of his wife, he could not but feel that, by this dispensation, much bitterness and heart-rending had been spared. "Yet, I must tell her," said the baronet; "I must tell her of what has happened. So long has she been virtually motherless, that the news of this actual death cannot plunge her into very deep affliction. I will see to this, Gerard, and to the matter of the funeral, whilst you go forth to redeem the lost brother of my poor wife."

So I started upon my journey that very night, and on the following evening I had arrived at the metropolis. Taking up my quarters at an hotel, I dispatched a hasty meal; and then, resolute to lose no time ere I set about the accomplishment of my desired object, I took forth Lawrence Moore's letter, and, spreading before me a map of London, I proceeded to acquaint myself minutely with the locality of the street where he was lodging. I had no sooner done this, than it occurred to me that, somewhat indiscreetly, I had taken up my quarters at a house directly in the opposite extremity of the town. Weary of the coach, in which I had been travelling for nearly four-and-twenty hours, I had quitted it at the west-end of Piccadilly, and Lawrence Moore was living in Limehouse.

But I was not much discomfited by this discovery. What were seven or eight miles to me, who had just travelled nearly two hundred? Oh, nothing! I threw my cloak over my shoulders, and was about to sally forth into the open air, when I heard a voice calling to the waiter, the tones of which, as I thought, were familiar to me.

My progress was arrested; I turned round my head, and, presently retracing my steps, I walked to the further extremity of the coffee-room, whence the voice which so struck me had proceeded. "Ha!" I exclaimed, "it may be—it must be—it is Smith!"

And it was actually the man of sense who sate there, regaling himself with a beef-steak and a bottle of Dublin porter.

"Well, Doveton, we are destined to meet in strange places," said John Smith. "From what quarter of the heavens have you just descended in your balloon?"

"Oh! I have given up my aeronautics, as you desired me," said I; "and, instead of a dreamer, I have become an actor."

"An actor!—what, have you taken to the stage? It is just the sort of thing that I should expect from you."

"Taken to the stage?—Yes; I took to the stage last night, and I have come by it all the way from Devonshire."

Smith smiled at my execrable witticism. "But what do you mean by turning actor?" he asked.

"I mean," said I, with an air of self-importance, "that I am leading now a life of action. I am no longer a dreaming boy, but a man, Smith; a man of the world."

"*You* a man of the world!—No, Doveton; you will never be that, I am sure."

"And why not?" said I, with an appearance of mortification.

"I thought that I was paying you a compliment," returned Smith; "and, instead of this, I find that I have offended you."

"Oh! no; you have not offended me. But tell me your reason for thinking that I shall never be a man of the world."

"Because you have too much heart; too much honesty; too much sincerity. You are all impulse: a man of the world never does anything upon impulse. I do not see why you should aspire to be reputed 'a man of the world.' I would not have you dream away your life; but still I would rather that you should become too visionary, than too worldly. Action, no doubt, is a fine thing: I have often told you to act. But to become a man of the world, is not to act, but to trifle. Now, I'll wager, Doveton, that you have come up to town for some purpose or other that

will utterly set aside your claims to the title which you so much desiderate."

"I am not so sure of that; but I will tell you what has brought me to town." And briefly I narrated the history of Mrs. Moore's death; of her children's departure from home; and of the causes which led to their departure.

"And do you call that acting like a man of the world?" asked Smith.

"I don't know; but I could not well have done otherwise. Michael and Ella have never been in London before, and they will stand in need of very much assistance."

"Are you going to find them out to-night?" asked Smith.

"I was upon the start, when your voice arrested my progress; indeed, I ought not to loiter any longer."

"Shall you walk there?"

"I have no other mode of proceeding."

"Take a cab," interrupted Smith; "for I'll answer for it, that you never find your way there; besides it is nearly seven miles, and after your journey, you must be tired. But stay; the chances are, Doveton, that in these occidental districts—"

"Occidental districts—what are they?"

"The west end of London;—but I was going

to tell you, that the cabmen, in these parts, know very little of the regions about Limehouse, and, therefore, you had better drive first to Leadenhall-street, and then take another cab onward."

"Very well."

"But now, tell me, Doveton, have you got any money in your pocket?"

I searched one pocket, then another, then a third, and at length I was compelled to acknowledge, with humiliation, that, but for the interposition of my square friend, I should have set out on my expedition, moneyless.

"How very lucky," I stammered out, "that you should have put me in mind of it. My purse is up-stairs, in my bed room; I remember taking it out of my pocket. Upon my word, I have had a narrow escape. I am always forgetting these things."

"And yet you aspire to be a man of the world. Depend upon it, Doveton, that his purse is the last thing which a man of the world ever forgets."

"I will go up for it, directly; but, in the mean time, I have forgotten to ask what *you* are doing now, in this house?"

"Oh! merely taking a late dinner, before starting by the Mail. I am going down to * * *, the

seat of our school-boy days, on a visit to old Doctor Goodenough."

"Ah! I shall go there some day, for I wish to see Arundel, the painter. How ill we used to treat that man. We mistook his genius for madness, and all his fine things for nonsense. We looked upon him merely as a drawing-master, and did not regard him as a great painter, in the least."

"And you think that he is one?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Perhaps he may be; but I am no judge of the fine arts; I never smeared a sheet of paper in my life."

"Smith, you are a perfect Goth; but I have no time to argue these things with you; I must be off.—Good bye, Smith; I hope that we shall soon meet again."

"So do I—but, it appears, Doveton, that your memory is very little tenacious; for, in spite of my recent warnings, you are, even now, setting forth without your purse."

"So I am.—Was there ever such a thoughtless being? Upon my word, Smith, we never meet together, without your saving me from the commission of some preposterous folly or other. But, I will run up for my purse, directly, and then take a cab to the city."

This I did. It was a miserable evening, in the latter end of December, when I set out in search of Larry Moore. It was not cold; but a small drizzly rain was descending, and the wind was exceeding high. Neither moon nor stars were visible; but in London, the universal gas is always ready to officiate vicariously for the heavenly constellations; and a 'dark night' is a thing never spoken of by the denizens of a lamp-illuminated metropolis. Yet there was something cheerless in the aspect of the city; for few were abroad on that night, but such as were compelled to leave their homes, and every thing was wet, and dirty, and miserable; it was, indeed, a most hope-subduing night.

My feelings are ever wont to harmonize strangely with external nature. When the sun shines brightly, I am full of hope; when the sky is clouded over, I despond. My mind is a species of barometer, and is elevated or depressed by atmospheric agency. A dark, dreary day, when the rain falls unceasingly, and there is a sensible weight in the superincumbent air, makes me a coward. As I rode towards Limehouse, I felt that I had neither hope nor courage; I was in a fearful state of nervous excitement. I saw nothing but danger and difficulty before

me. I magnified trifles into vast impediments, and almost wished that I had never started on the venture.

I threw myself back in the cab, and drawing the curtain before me, I closed my eyes and endeavoured to bring my mind into a state of more favourable serenity; but the more I struggled against the natural tide of my emotions, the more violent did those emotions become. I set before me, in glowing colours, the delights of a complete success; but when I thought of Michael and Ella, so many distracting considerations rose up, and agitated my mind, that I saw nothing but a web of tangled intricacies — difficulty within difficulty, and fear within fear—a tortuous labyrinth of adventure for me to thread. Mrs. Moore, Lady Euston, Mr. Anstruther, Lawrence Moore, and the mysterious Paul Phillips, as yet merely a name in my book of knowledge, presented themselves to my imagination, in strange and ever-varying attitudes, shifting now here, now there, and forming themselves into closely-woven groups, each one wholly different from the last. A painful state of incertitude disquieted me; the little light, which shone through a crevice, only rendered the surrounding darkness more palpable. “Oh! would,” I exclaimed, “that I knew nothing; or, knowing a little, that I might be suffered to know all.”

Unable to calm the troubled waters of my mind by any inward process, I endeavoured to fix my thoughts upon outward things, and to substitute observation for reflection. So I drew back the curtains of the cabriolet, and began earnestly to converse with the driver. I asked him a multitude of strange questions; laughed at his answers; listened to his anecdotes, of which he had many, all of course relating to his profession; until, as I thought, I had thoroughly extracted the aroma of the man's character. At length, as we neared the end of our journey, a sudden thought entered my brain, and I said to my charioteer, "Old boy, do you know any one named Paul Phillips?"

"No," replied the man; "I can't say that I does; and yet there is something in the name which sounds familiar-like, somehow. Let me think a little.—No, sir,—it's no go; and yet I'm sure—but my memory is failing."

"I'll tell you what, then; if you should happen to remember, I will"—but I checked myself suddenly; for having so lately seen Smith, I was more alive to the absurdity of my conduct. "But never mind; there may be five thousand Paul Phillipses in the country," I added.

As Smith had directed me, I quitted my cab in Leadenhall-street, and almost instantly ensconced myself in another. "To Limehouse;" and having

given this order, I again relapsed into my old state of nervousness.

I thought that I was going into an unknown region, amongst a set of strange savages; and I fully expected to meet with insult, if not with actual violence, in these demi-civilized districts. There was something very horrible in the idea of a small public-house, in the neighbourhood of Narrow-street, Limehouse; and my imagination, which was always abundantly fertile, conjured up strange visions of trap-doors, and butchers' knives, and gangs of relentless robbers. I thought that I was about, certainly, to be victimized, and that I should never return to Meadow-bank again. "In these haunts of depravity," I asked myself, "who is safe?" And it was good for me that I thus acted the self-questioner; for I answered, "If I am not safe, then Ella Moore is in deadly peril;" and thinking of this, all selfish fear forsook me suddenly, and a chivalrous desire took possession of my soul in its stead. I almost longed that I might be called upon to display my courage; and I fancied myself a knight-errant, about to rescue an afflicted damsel. I clenched my hand, and I sighed to think that I was swordless; and I turned to my grim-visaged charioteer, exclaiming eagerly, "Drive faster."

"Did you say Narrow-street, sir?"

"Yes. Do you know the *Boatswain's Whistle*, in Water-lane, near Narrow-street?"

"No, sir; I can't say that I do; but we'll manage to find out. It be plaguey bad driving in these parts; the streets are no wider than the pavements in other places; and as for the lamps, sir, they're as far apart as turnpike-gates on a high road."

"Never mind, but drive on; I'll give you a double fare for your trouble; only drive quick, for I'm in a hurry to be at the end of my journey."

"Yes, your honour; and many thanks for the double fare. But here we be at the corner of Narrow-street."

"Well, drive on."

"I can't, sir; there's something coming down?"

"And no room to pass?"

"None at all, sir; it's good luck that I seed it in time, or we should have been into a terrible jam."

"Then I will get out; here is your money; I doubt not but that I shall discover the way. And now," I soliloquized, "now for action," as I ran up the dimly-lighted street, which so significantly they have nominated *Narrow*.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MISCHANCES OF QUIXOTISM.

Lo ! I must tell a tale of chivalry,
For large white plumes are dancing in mine eye,
Not like the formal crest of latter days—

• • • • •
I hotly burn to be a Caladore,
A very Red Cross Knight—a stout Leander."

KEATS.

HAVING leaped from the cabriolet, I ran along the street, seriously bent upon an adventure. My nerves at this moment were unwontedly well strung; I felt that I had strength and courage enough to face a whole legion of fiends, much more a regiment of men, I thought that I was a chivalrous knight-errant setting forth lance in rest to rescue a captive damsel from the bondage of some cruel giant. If I had been backed by

an army of mailed followers I could not have been more valorous than I was, when I ran along Narrow-street, alone, and in a strange place, and utterly un-armed. I had not even so much as a walking-stick in my hand; but I clenched my fist, thought of Ella Moore, and fancied myself a stout hearted hero.

The night was gusty; it rained at intervals, and the street was exceedingly dark. The lamps intended to throw a light upon the obscurity of this narrow thoroughfare, had for the most part been just demolished by a squadron of drunken sailors, so that there was many a pitch-black *hiatus* between the few still existing luminaries, which emitted the smallest possible quantum of light for the benefit of luckless way-farers. But on I went heedless of the darkness, and it was fortunate for me that there were no vehicles passing adown the street, or I should infallibly have run against them, and very probably been altogether demolished.

But instead of this, as I ran up the street I came violently in contact with a moving mass of humanity, and I heard a Babel of tongues addressing me neither in the choicest phraseology, nor in the most blandiloquent intonations. I am not sure that it would answer any very important purpose to write down the *dicta* of these creatures, by courtesy human; let it suffice that •

they cursed me heartily for running against them, and wanted to know what I meant by such behaviour.

These fellows, as it appeared to me, though I could very imperfectly perceive them, were a mixture of marine and fresh-water sailors all comfortably intoxicated. I do not precisely know how many there were, but I should imagine about half-a-dozen. They hemmed me in on every side, and pushed me about from one to the other. "None o' my child," cried one of them, the most drunk of the party, as he took me by the nape of the neck and thrust me forward into the arms of his opposite companion, who repeating the same mystic words, sent me back again to him, who first propelled me.

This was intolerable. Was I, Gerard Doveton, a gentleman, an author, and a knight-errant, to be jostled and pushed here and there by a number of drunken sailors? Could I submit to such usage, alone and unarmed though I were? I longed for a sword that I might hew my way through the obstructing crowd of my enemies, and exclaim with the redoubtable soldier-poet Sydney: "*Aut viam inveniam aut faciam.*"

I grew wondrous wroth in this extremity; my dignity had been grievously insulted, and I had wound myself up for an adventure; I thought that now a very favorable opening presented itself,

and so I determined to put my heroic qualities to the proof without further delay.

“ You cowardly poltroons,” I cried aloud in a voice of thunder, “ you dastards, you cravens, I defy you !” and at the same time clenching my retributory fist, I struck the nearest of my opponents with all the vigour I possessed, on the face.

These warlike proceedings on my part had the effect of generating in the breasts of my enemies a servile spirit of imitation, and it was not very long before I was doomed to experience an anguish similar to that which I had inflicted. There is scarcely anything in the world which elicits such a prompt re-payment as a blow. This I found to my cost when I struck the sailor, for I was almost instantly knocked down.

I was not very much hurt, but there was a vast deal of mud in the street, and the sailors rolled me, with chuckling malignity, into the slush, and there they left me to cool myself: for my blood was at fever-heat just then.

My enemies, having fully punished me for my aggressions, bustled onward, and as I was rising from the kennel, I heard one of the party say to another something about “ Poll Phillips.”

In a moment I forgot my discomfiture, wrath, vengeance, indignation, all passed away. I stood erect again, and heedless of the punishment that

I had received, and the dirt which enveloped me, I cried out. "Stop, stop, my good friends, I entreat you—I implore you to stop."

But they heeded not my supplications: on the contrary, they rather quickened their pace, and seeing this, I determined to follow them, for I had caught the words, "Poll Phillips," or "Paul Phillips," I knew not which, and I was resolved at all risks to ascertain whether the individual alluded to by Mrs. Moore upon her death-bed, was amongst the drunken party or known to any one of them.

So I ran after them still crying out, "Stop, my good friends, I have something particular to ask you "

"Oh, yes!—I suppose so; but we arn't so *very* fresh," said one of my enemies, as he turned round and beheld me a few paces in his rear.

"Are either of you Paul Phillips?" I asked in a conciliatory voice, panting between every word.

"All of us, and none of us,—but ask the gutter," said he, whom I had stricken in the face, and as he spoke he tripped up my legs, and again I lay sprawling in the mud.

Then they all ran away laughing, and when I regained my legs, they had turned the corner of the street, and were out of sight. I was horribly crest-fallen. I stood still for several minutes not

knowing what to do. I was bruised both in body and in mind. I was all over dirt, and my face was besmeared with blood; but as the street was almost utterly dark, I consoled myself with the reflexion that there was no witness of my humiliation; but then how was I to proceed? My ardour was somewhat moderated, and I no longer imagined myself a hero, but a very ridiculous Quixote, a "knight of the rueful countenance," indeed, and I began heartily to despise myself.

But what was I to do? I was almost on the point of beating a retreat, and returning to my quarters westward, without accomplishing my purpose. But pride stepped in and forbade the retreat; then vanity suggested that I should present a deplorable aspect to my dearly beloved little Ella; and then—but it must be acknowledged that I was in a very unpleasant predicament; I did not know the precise situation of the "Boatswain's Whistle," and I saw no body in the streets, whom I could ask, and I did not like to go into a house to enquire, because I was all begrimed with dirt, and my face was besmeared with blood, and more than all things in the world hated I always to be laughed at, "Oh! Gerard Doveton, Gerard Doveton!"—I soliloquized: "why waited you not patiently till the morning?"

"But the river must be somewhere in this neighbourhood," I continued, "I will go thither and

wash my face," so I retraced my steps, and soon found that I was on the very margin of the Thames. I climbed over some railings, and stood upon a sort of wharf, where laying myself down at full length, with my head hanging over the edge of it, I managed to wash my face.

I found the cold water rather grateful to my burning temples; so not content with cleansing the mud from my face, I continued for some minutes to bathe my throbbing brow with the cool element, until I resolved upon a complete immersion of my head, and leaning over, that I might accomplish this feat, I lost my balance, o'er-topped the edge of the wharf, and fell headlong into the water.

I know not by what process I contrived to save myself from drowning, as I never was able to swim a stroke. But so it was, that after a little floundering I found myself again standing upon the wharf, dripping with wet and miserably cold. I shook myself, as a dog does after bathing, tried to wring some of the water from my hair, and then putting on my hat, I walked with brisk steps in the direction of the street I had just quitted.

"Well, after all," I soliloquized, "it is as well to be wet as to be dirty, but what shall I do? shall I turn homewards, or shall I persevere in my undertaking?"

I thought of Ella, and I made answer, "I will—yes I *will*—persevere."

So I walked onward till I came to a house whence I heard many voices proceeding. I looked up; it was evidently a tavern; but it was not the "Boatswain's Whistle."

But I resolved, that I would enter and inquire my way to the establishment I was so anxious to reach. So I pushed open the door, and presently I found myself in a room, where it was entirely impossible to see more than a yard before me, so dense was the tobacco-smoke, which filled the apartment.

There was a great noise, and as it appeared to me, more talkers and singers than listeners. Oaths were abundant, blasphemy and obscenity at a premium; I felt an inclination to retreat almost as soon as I had entered the room.

But I summoned courage to call for the landlord; and he came, half drunk. "Will you have the goodness," said I "to acquaint me with the best way to the Boatswain's Whistle?"

The man laughed, and his face assumed an impudently knowing look as he answered. "The way to the *Whistle*—and you ask me the way to the *Whistle*—Ha-ha! to ask the keeper of the *Anchor*, the way to the *Whistle*, that's good."

And suddenly it occurred to me that I was asking the way to one tavern from the proprietor of another and a rival establishment. So I said, "My good, Sir, I am not going to patronize the *Whistle*, far from it, I prefer the *Anchor*, so order me some brandy and water; but the truth is, that I wish to see a person who is living at the *Boatswain's Whistle*, and I don't know the way to the house."

"No, Sir, no gentleman does," replied mine host of the *Anchor* in a more obsequious voice than heretofore. "'Tis not a fit place for a gentleman — low, Sir, very low indeed."

"But let me have my brandy and water, and then tell me the way to the *Whistle*, for low or high, Sir, I must go there to-night."

"Sorry for that, Sir, on your account, as they arn't respectable people there, Sir, at all;" but having brought me the brandy and water, which I paid for immediately, the publican proceeded to acquaint me with the way to poor Larry's abode.

I drank off the brandy and water, for I thought that after my immersion it might have a beneficial effect; and then set out with all possible speed for the locality of the *Boatswain's Whistle*.

I was not long before I had reached the tavern thus designated, and my heart beat quick as I crossed the threshold of the house, which was

very much of a description similar to that which I had just quitted, only, as I thought, somewhat more respectable; I called the landlord, and I asked in hurried accents: "Is there a young man named Moore lodging in your house?"

The landlord shook his head, "Know no body of the name, Sir, at all."

"But is not this the Boatswain's Whistle?"

"Yes; sure enough—but they calls it the *Whistle* for short."

I was in perplexity—"But tell me," I said, "is there not a young man here who has been very ill indeed of late?"

"Yes; poor fellow—I thought he would ha' kicked in the house."

"Is he here now?"

"Yes; but he's getting a little better. The takers won't have him this time, I think."

"And tell me, my friend—have two young people, a brother and sister, come to see the invalid?"

"Yes, Sir—and they be here now."

"Then the sick man's name must be Moore."

"No, Sir, I'm quite sure it isn't."

"What is it then?"

"Lawrence."

"Ah! Lawrence—I know it—'tis Lawrence Moore; can I see him?"

"Yes, Sir, if you please: I will show you the

way to his room. 'Tis not one of the best in the house, but we are going to move him to-morrow—now, Sir,—take care, there are two steps downwards—and now you go up—can you see ? ”

“ Not very well—but I can grope my way—and how many more flights of stairs ? ”

“ Only one, Sir, and then you are at the top of the house—these stairs are none of the widest—gently, Sir, gently, let me go first—That’s it—now this is the door.”

I tapped, and a well-known voice sweetly uttered the words, “ Come in.”

It was Ella’s voice :—how my heart beat, and how my hand trembled as I laid it upon the door-latch.

I entered, and there—but I must pause a little ere I tell the reader what I beheld.

CHAPTER V.

THE RAINBOW HUES OF LOVE'S PAINTED WINDOW.

In many ways does the full heart reveal
 The presence of the love it would conceal.

* * * *

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
 All are but ministers of love,
 And feed his sacred flame.

•
 COLERIDGE.

THE apartment which I now entered was small and exceedingly low — so low that in some places I was obliged to incline my head as I walked. It was a garret-room, and the ceiling thereof was angular and sloping, or to express it in one word, pyramidal. At the further extremity of the chamber there was a narrow hearth, and a small aperture by way of chimney; upon the hearth, for there was no appearance of any thing re-

sembling a grate, smoked and crackled a few faggots, but very slender was the flame, and very little the warmth that they emitted. The smoke, on the other hand, was abundant, but unwilling to escape up the chimney it had dispersed itself voluminously about the room, and every now and then a gust of wind sent a cloud of it to thicken the obscurity.

A little way from the hearth upon a deal box, was a solitary farthing-rushlight stuck in a black wine-bottle, serving to illuminate the chamber, after a fashion which is generally called "darkness visible;" and in the further corner of the room was a bed or rather a wretched pallet, curtainless, sheetless, pillowless; and there lay poor Larry Moore!

But who were with him? Who tended the suffering youth? Michael and Ella? Nay; I beheld in the room two maidens; and who were they?

The one was Ella; she sate at the foot of the pallet with a book, which she had been reading, in her hand. It was a borrowed one, and I almost fear that it had not been very much read.

It was a Bible — Ella Moore had just been reading the story of the Prodigal.

The other little maiden was younger than Ella, but scarcely less beautiful and graceful. She sate upon the floor by the head of the pallet, and whilst with one arm she supported the head of

the sufferer, with the other she held a little basin, from which he was eating some gruel, when I entered.

She was dressed in a strange fantastic manner—in a scarlet frock trimmed with black, and surmounted by a black velvet boddice. The frock, or rather tunic, was very short, and descended not much lower than her knees; but she wore a pair of white spangled trowsers, with a fringe of tarnished gold bullion, which reached about half way down her legs, and displayed to full advantage a beautifully rounded ankle, encased in a stocking of scarlet silk with large black clocks, corresponding with her gown. On her feet she wore tiny little black velvet slippers; and altogether her appearance was picturesque in the extreme, resembling that of a Spanish *Gitanella*.

I need scarcely tell the reader that this little damsel was no other than the *Sylphide* of Mr. Centaur's troop — the Mademoiselle Beau-pied of the fair.

"Ella — Lawrence! — and I have found you at last! dear Ella, speak to me," I exclaimed as I walked tremblingly towards the pallet of the invalid.

"Who is that?" asked the sufferer in a feeble voice, which was echoed by little Beau-pied. But Ella had no need to ask such a question—the tones which she heard were familiar to her — she

knew them — instantly she knew them, and she uttered a faint shriek.

“Gerard!” and the Bible fell from her hand. She turned her face towards the door and beheld me. “Gerard!” and she endeavoured to rise, but her limbs trembled; she was without strength, and she sunk again upon the floor.

In a moment I was seated by her side, “Ella, dear Ella!” and I took one of her little hands into mine. “Ella, are you well — very well! Now tell me all about yourself and about Lawrence, and about Michael. But where is Michael, I see him not — Ella, where is your brother?”

“He has gone out to buy something for Larry, he will very speedily return.”

Then I turned my face towards the suffering youth, who scarcely seemed to recognize me through the smoke. “Lawrence, are you better? How feel you? To-morrow you shall be more comfortable,” and then nearing the head of the bed, I took one of his lean hands into mine; and said, “Lawrence, do you know me?”

He started and looked earnestly into my face. “Know you? Oh! yes, Mr. Doveton, it is not so long since we met — I know you, but do you know *me*? Is there any likeness between the creature that I was last October, and the pale, haggard wretch you see me now?”

Indeed there was very little likeness. Poor

Lawrence! his *once* noble frame now bore the semblance almost of a skeleton. His cheeks were sunken and colourless; his eyes dull and inflamed; his hair, once so thick and clustering, had almost entirely fallen off. There was scarcely a trace of beauty in his face. Oh! indeed, it was a piteous sight to behold such an abject ruin of a structure once so beautiful.

He drew up his shirt-sleeves, and holding out his arm, he said to me, "Look there; you might span it at the thickest part."

I thought that he said this reproachfully. Perhaps he was thinking at the time, that but for my appearance at Croydon Fair, he would still have been in health and affluence, — some thoughts of a similar nature flitted through my brain at that moment.

"Oh! but you will soon be stronger," I said: "to-morrow we will move you into better lodgings; you shall have a medical man to attend you daily, you have no less than four nurses, Lawrence, and we will take such care of you — won't we, Ella? And you shall have all manner of strengthening things until you are quite well again, and a very giant refreshed."

"You are very kind, Mr. Doveton, very kind, indeed, and I know that I am getting better. But I have been very foolish and very wicked, and very ungrateful to my poor mother. I do

not deserve that she should ever love me again — and yet she will, I know that she will, Mr. Doveton. I have caused her a world of agony I am sure, but she will receive the Prodigal back again open-armed, and run out to meet him I am sure.”

I was silent. The memory of Mrs. Moore’s death-bed came upon me with a sickening influence. I could not speak — I sate statue-like by the bed-side, and I almost tried to persuade myself that what I had witnessed at Grass-hill was nothing more than a dream. Could it really be possible that Mrs. Moore was dead? — *Dead!* and her poor children in utter ignorance of this terrible event.

And upon me had devolved the duty — oh! how painful! — of dispersing their ignorance. What was to be done? The truth must be told — but *how*? I was in a fearful state of distraction, and I uttered a deep-drawn sigh.

“Ah! you may well sigh,” said Lawrence, thinking over all that I have done. But you bring tidings, I suppose, of my mother. Have you come from Grass-hill direct?”

A simple affirmative was all that I could articulate.

“And how is my poor mother?”

To this I could make no answer. I trembled all over with nervous excitement. My head drooped, and I was silent.

"What ails you," asked Ella, "are you ill? You shiver as though you were in an ague-fit."

"Just as I do every day of my life," added Lawrence, "but God preserve you, Mr. Doveton, from such wretchedness."

And here little Beau-pied, who sate beside me, lifted up her eyes from the ground, on which they had been fixed ever since my entrance, and said, "I think that you are wet — you seem quite dripping with wet."

"And so I am," I said, rejoicing in the opportunity thus offered to me of changing the subject of our discourse, "and so I am — miserably wet — the fact is — but don't be frightened, Ella, I have had an immersion in the river—a cold bath," and I endeavoured to laugh. "I had a fall, or rather I was hustled into the gutter by a number of drunken men, and, trying to wash my face in the river, some how or other I over-reached myself; but I am not much the worse for the accident — so don't be uneasy, Ella."

"Oh! but I am — you will catch a dangerous cold if you sit in these damp clothes. Oh! do go home and change them, I beseech you."

"Oh! no, Ella, my home is at the other end of the town — at least six miles off from this, and it will take me a long time to go there and back, Ella."

"But you need not come back to-night. Much

better would it be for you to rest — Michael will be home presently, and there are enough of us to wait on Larry.”

“Oh! but I have so many questions to ask you — I cannot go home to-night. I doubt not but that Michael can lend me some clothes — besides there is no danger.”

“There is — oh! indeed there is --- but hark! those are Michael’s footsteps; how very glad he will be to see you. Oh! Gerard, you have ever been to us a very present help in trouble.”

And here Michael entered the room. Upon first beholding me he started back, as he thought that there was some intruder in the chamber, whom it would be part of his duty to dispel. But presently he recognized the outline of my face, and his surprise ~~was~~ speedily mingled with joy. “What, Gerard! our best of friends—how strange — it cannot be, yet it is -- oh! dear Gerard, whence have you come?”

“From Grass-hill.”

“I thought that you were at Charlton Abbey. Oh! how secure do I feel that we are now—”

“I have been at Charlton Abbey as you know; but I reached the neighbourhood of Grass-hill on a visit to Sir Reginald, just in time to hear of your departure.”

“And you started off to aid us,” cried Effie: “oh! good, kind!” but she checked herself sud-

ently, and turning round to Michael, she added. "But all this time, brother, he is sitting in wet clothes — can you not take him to your room and lend him some of your own?"

"Oh! that I can—such as they are," returned Michael, eagerly, "anything is better than catching cold. I will go below for a candle," and Michael quitted the room.

All this time little Beau-pied had been making ready and administering the medicine, which Michael had brought, to the poor invalid. The child seemed timid and constrained; she did not know how to interpret my sudden appearance amongst them. But a day or two before she had been all in all to the suffering youth, and now she was only one of a number—amongst strangers who, kind as they were, seemed to regard her with an eye of suspicion—she was uneasy, and though she slackened not in her attentions, and would resign her office to no one, she set about her accustomed duties with an embarrassed air, scarcely uttering a single word, or venturing to uplift her eyes. She felt that she was an alien—an interloper in this family party, and she seemed to know that she occupied amongst them a very doubtful position. She loved Lawrence Moore with all the fervour of her childish heart; and she would suffer no one to interfere with that which she deemed her right. She had watched beside his bed from

the first hour of his sickness, and were others, who arrived but yesterday, to deprive her of the prerogative, in which she gloried, and to render her subordinate to them? "No, no," she whispered to Lawrence, when Ella and Michael were conversing together at the opposite extremity of the room," let the whole world flock to your bedside, I must still be your head-nurse. I was the first with you, and I will be the last to leave you : none shall turn me out of my place."

And as though she were fearful of her throne being usurped, she had not since the arrival of Michael and Ella, once quitted her old position by the head of the invalid's pallet. There she sat watching his every motion, and every now and then looking furtively at her rivals, as though she were in constant apprehension of some hostile movement upon their part. Although Lawrence had written for them, as she thought, she wished that they had never come. She did not know of what use they were in the sick-chamber, whilst she was present and capable of doing all things for the sufferer. She was jealous of their kindness ; she wished that all the kindness and affection lavished upon Lawrence should emanate from her heart ; and that all the little soothing acts, which mitigated the evils of sickness, should be the work of her hands. Poor little creature ! this

was weakness upon her part, but it proceeded from the strength of her love.

Michael returned with another rush-light, and leading me into a room precisely similar to that which we had just quitted, he assisted me to change my garments, which were indeed saturated with the wet. As we were doing this, we asked one another a multitude of questions; but very little transpired of which the reader is not already acquainted.

Immediately upon the receipt of Larry's letter, Mrs. Moore had signified her intention of starting herself for London, and it was with the utmost difficulty that Michael and Ella persuaded their mother to abandon such an undertaking. "Oh! no, let us go together," said both the children in concord—"I will go," cried Ella, as a nurse;—"And I as her protector," added Michael.

"But you have never yet been to London," said the widow Moore, "and ignorant of its ways, you will lose yourselves in its crowded thoroughfares."

"Oh! no—no—we shall not lose ourselves," replied Michael, "for Lawrence has told us the name of his street, and surely we shall easily find it."

"Not very easily, Michael; but simple and inexperienced as you are, you are still not destitute

of wisdom ; but you must have money, for without that you will be able to accomplish nothing. It is fortunate that we have never been so wealthy as we are now ; the money, which we received in that strange manner may be now applied to the best of purposes. Now, indeed, my children, does my mind misgive me, that Larry was not the donor of that money, or, if he was, he has beggared himself in order to enrich his mother."

"Oh! mother," cried Ella Moore, "be sure that it was Mr. Doveton, who sent us that rich gift."

And when Michael had reached this portion of his narrative, he broke off suddenly, and taking me by the hand, said, "Confess, Gerard, that Ella was right — confess, for there's no use denying it — we are so certain — Ella and I — that we have added the gift already to the long list of favours you have conferred on us."

I was silent, and Michael continued, "Ah! Gerard, this silence is ample confession—you need not utter the word."

Then Michael proceeded thus with his story. "We lost no time in preparing for our journey. We put up a few clothes in a bag, and set out immediately for Merryvale, where we had not to tarry long before one of the coaches arrived on its way to London, and there was fortunately accommodation for us both."

"You did not suffer Ella to travel outside in this bitter weather?" I exclaimed.

"She would fain have gone outside," replied Michael, "indeed, she entreated me to let her, because it would be a saving of expense, and there would be more money then left for Larry. But I would not suffer her."

"Right, dear Michael."

"We reached London yesterday morning, and with some little difficulty we contrived to discover the locality of Larry's abode. We entered the house, Ella and I, fully expecting to find our poor brother in utter solitude; guess, therefore, our astonishment at beholding that strange little girl sitting by his bed-side, and nursing him with the tenderest solicitude."

"And what said Lawrence?"

"When our first salutations were over, and Ella and I had satisfied ourselves that our poor brother was no longer in peril, but that there was every prospect of his speedy recovery, Larry said to us, 'I suppose you are astonished at seeing that I have a companion in my misfortunes. I hope that you will both of you be very kind and very grateful to my little nurse, for without her assistance I should have by this time been snug in my grave.' And this is all we know about the little girl, for since our arrival she has sate by his bed-

side unceasingly, and we have never been able to question our brother."

"Do you know who she is?" said I.

"One of the player children, I suppose, by the strange theatrical aspect of her costume. She is a beautiful little creature at all events, and I could almost fall in love with her myself."

"I think," said I, "that she is something better than she seems — she was not born to exhibit in a circus."

Michael's cheeks blushed deep as crimson.—He was thinking of his own lot — and dim reminiscences of a by-gone state began again to disturb his mind.

He was silent for a few moments, and then, as though he were striving to disperse these distracting suspicions, he paced the room once or twice, and then pausing suddenly, he asked me, "How was my mother when you left Grass-hill? You saw her of course before you started."

This was the question above all others which I least desired to have addressed to me, and which I was the least prepared to answer. Dreading the disclosure that I had to make, I resolved to defer it as long as possible, and then to break the melancholy news gradually to poor Michael. But what was I to answer? — I was in a colorable perplexity; I stooped down to raise something

from the ground, and pretended not to hear Michael.

This gave me a little time for consideration. "How was my mother, when you left Grass-hill yesterday?" asked Michael a second time.

"What was that you asked, Michael?"

Michael repeated his question a third time.

"I don't know, Michael," said I.

"But surely you saw her before you left."

"No, I did not."

"How very strange!" cried Michael, fully believing in his innocence that I spoke the truth.

"Strange, Michael, what is strange? I only arrived in the neighbourhood on the evening preceeding my departure."

"But without seeing my mother how did you learn Larry's residence — as she alone had the power of informing you?"

I never could stand a cross-examination, and here I was detected in a palpable lie.

The eloquent blood rushed to my face and crimsoned my very forehead. I felt that I must say something, so I stammered out, "How did I learn it? — How did I learn Larry's residence? — I — I — I learnt it from Larry himself — that is to say, I read Larry's letter."

"But where did you read it, Gerard, if not in my mother's cottage. I fear that something evil has happened."

“Where did I read it — I read it — Larry’s letter, I mean — Sir Reginald brought it to me at the hall.”

Now, if I had neither blushed nor stammered this answer might have done very well — but coupled with my crimsoned cheeks and my faltering voice, it was very much like a lying evasion. Few were ever less suspicious than Michael, but now mistrust crept into his heart.

“Oh! Gerard,” he said, in a supplicating voice, *“pray forgive me, if my suspicions are causeless; but, indeed, I doubt very much whether that which you have told me is correct. I have terrible apprehensions in my mind that you are concealing some fearful truth. There is something strange in your manner—you blush, and you look not at me when you speak, you stammer and — dear Gerard, if any thing evil has happened, pray tell me that I may know the worst at once.”*

I hesitated—but after a while I summoned courage, and said, “Well, then, your mother is poorly.”

“Poorly — nay, Gerard, tell me, is she not *very* ill?”

“Not very — that is to say, she is confined to her bed, but the doctor —”

“Oh! Gerard, you are still concealing the truth — I am sure you have not told me the worst.”

“ Well, then, she is very ill — ”

“ And what her disease — oh ! Gerard, I will return to Grass-hill to-morrow, if you will attend to poor Larry in my absence — but what is my mother’s disease ? ”

“ Paralysis. ”

“ Is she speechless, Gerard — ”

“ Yes — ”

“ And dying do you think ? ”

I was silent. Oh ! tell me, Gerard — tell me the worst at once — if you love me, tell me, the worst — *she is dying, or perhaps, she is dead. — Speak, Gerard. Is she dying, or is she dead ?* ”

I thought that my heart would have burst, as I uttered the word “ *Dead.* ”

“ *Dead !* and you saw her die — then I am a miserable orphan. ”

We mingled our tears together, and then we knelt down and prayed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MONSTER-BIRTH OF AN IMPULSE.

O strange and hidden power of sympathy,
That of like fates, though all unknown to each,
Dost make blind instincts, orphan's heart to orphan's
Drawing by dim disquiet.

COLLIERIDGE.

I have started many strange beasts in my time,
But none less like a man than this before me.

Ibid.

It was a week after my arrival in the metropolis, and it was the day of Mrs. Moore's funeral. Michael had returned to Grass-hill that he might follow the remains of his mother to the grave; whilst I remained in charge of the invalid and his two delicate nurses.

I had removed my friends into comfortable lodgings, situated in a decent part of the town. Lawrence was gradually gaining strength, although the news of his mother's death had occasioned a

temporary relapse — still he was much stouter and stronger, and it was, indeed, pleasant to see the altered aspect of his face. His disease had been chiefly made up of a series of low fevers attended with quotidian ague; and having been fearfully reduced by these repeated attacks it necessarily required much time to restore him to his pristine condition. Never was a sick man more fortunate in his nurses than Lawrence. It would be almost worth one's while to endure sickness voluntarily, if we could be always sure of being tended by the delicate hands of such gentle ministers as Ella and Beau-pied.

I lodged not in the same house with my friends; because in this instance, I was more than usually inclined to humour the conventional prejudices of the world. Ella was now a woman, she was nearly eighteen, and one of the most beautiful young creatures that eye ever beheld. I would not, therefore, dwell beneath the same roof with her, although Lawrence Moore, her natural protector, was one of the party; for the tongue of scandal is ever busy, and I loved Ella too well to subject her by any indiscretion of mine, even to be suspected for a single moment by the most slanderous censor in the world. So I took a lodging in the same street, and the nearness of my domicile enabled me to be constantly in the presence of my friends.

It was a week after my arrival in London, and Lawrence was sitting in a comfortable arm-chair beside a blazing fire. Little Beau-pied sate upon a stool at the invalid's feet, and Ella was preparing at a table some article of mourning apparel.

Ella was very pale, and her eyes were dim with weeping. She had grieved much for her poor mother; the loss, indeed, to her was irreparable.

I sate beside Ella at the table, and was endeavouring to raise her drooping spirits by conversation of a cheerful, though not of a flippant, nature. But Ella refused to be comforted. "It is the day of my mother's funeral," said she.

Then she was silent, and continued her work, large tear-drops all the while coursing down her pale cheeks. But presently she folded up her work, and rising from her seat, she placed it in the drawer of a side-table; then she said to me, "It is the day of my mother's funeral, and it ought to be passed in prayer."

And little Beau-pied, whose lustrous eyes had been fixed intently upon Larry's face, now turned herself round towards Ella, and said, "I don't know how to pray."

"Have you never prayed, my dear?" asked Ella.

"No — never — except once or twice when I prayed Mr. Centaur not to beat me, and then I went down upon my knees."

“Have you never gone down upon your knees to God?” asked Ella, in a voice of kindness.

“No — never,” replied Beau-pied, thoughtfully.

“Do you know the meaning of the word God?” asked Ella.

But here Larry interrupted his sister. “My dear Ella, what is the use of asking the child these questions?”

“That I might teach her what she does not know,” said Ella, “and surely this will be some use.”

“Oh! yes,” cried the little girl, looking up beseechingly into Larry’s face, “pray let her teach me what I do not know; I shall be very glad to be taught.”

And Ella began to teach. How lucid were the explanations of the young preceptress — how beautifully adapted to the comprehension of the simplest, the most uninformed intellect. Little Beau-pied listened to all that was said with wrapt attention, and apparently with delight. The answers, which she returned to Ella’s questions, manifested considerable natural acuteness, but proved at once that she was utterly uneducated. All that was told her seemed new and strange. She was astonished, and at times incredulous, as Ella described in simple terms the wonderful attributes of the Almighty. Her curiosity at the same time was awakened, and she asked Ella a multitude of

questions. At length she said, "I think now that I know who God is, and how we ought to pray to Him."

"Have you ever learned to read?" said I.

"No — never. I have learned to dance, to ride, to sing, and to play a little on the tambourine — but I have never had a book in my hand."

"Shall I teach you to read then?" asked Ella.

"Oh! do, *do*;" and her bright eyes became brighter with earnestness,—"*do* teach me to read, and I will leave off dancing and riding."

"Nonsense," interrupted Larry, pettishly, "your dancing and singing will find you in bread, which is more than your book-learning ever will."

The little girl cast down her eyes, and the brightness of her face was over-shadowed. "Don't you like me to read, Lawrence," she asked, and the tones of her voice were very sad. "If you don't like it, I will not learn — I will promise never to learn."

"Ponder well what you answer, Larry," said I.

Larry pondered, and answered "Learn."

"Oh! thank you, thank you!" cried the little girl, "and when shall I begin to learn?"

"To-morrow," replied Ella.

The morrow came, and early in the morning the business of instruction was commenced. What a beautiful thing it was to see the Mistress and the Pupil together — both of them so lovely, yet so

different in their loveliness. How striking, too, was the contrast between Ella's simple mourning garb, and the fantastical scarlet dress of her companion. These two young maidens, as they sate there side by side, would, indeed, have made an exquisite picture.

I never was more deeply in love with Ella, than when I beheld her for the first time acting the preceptress to poor little Beau-pied. How I longed to throw my arms around her neck, and to claim her as my beautiful bride.

But instead of this, starting suddenly from my chair, I rushed out of the room without uttering a word. I ran down stairs, along the hall and into the street. Then I called the first cab that I could see, and leaping into it, I said to the driver, "Narrow Street, Limehouse, as quick as ever you can go."

A sudden thought had flashed across my brain: It was this — that since the first day of my arrival in London I had never once thought of Paul Phillips — "*Paul Phillips knows all*," — such were the last words which Mrs. Moore had traced with her finger on the coverlid of her bed ere she died, and I thought that from Paul Phillips alone there was any chance of my learning the true history of Michael's and Ella's parentage.

Now I was positive that I had heard the name pronounced by one of the drunken sailors, who

had treated me so cruelly on my way to the *Boatswain's Whistle*; and it was not unreasonable to suppose that either at this house or at the *Anchor*, the sailors had contrived to intoxicate themselves. I resolved, therefore, that I would inquire at both of these taverns after the mysterious *Paul Phillips*, and for this purpose I ordered the cabman to drive me into the precincts of Limehouse.

As I went along, another very important probability was suggested by the nature of my reflections. Pondering upon the strange history of the Moores, it occurred to me that by the sudden death of the widow woman, there was a likelihood of some strange facts being elicited; as amongst her papers and properties, there would most probably be some document or other which might throw a partial light upon the obscurity which now enveloped the birth of Michael and Ella. "If it should be so, Michael is there," thought I, "and he will suffer nothing to escape him."

I arrived safely at the *Boatswain's Whistle* this time without any adventure. Having dismissed my cab, I entered the house, and summoned the landlord to my presence. He welcomed me with the utmost obsequiousness, and conducted me to a private room, which he dignified with the title of a *parlour*.

"I came here to ask you," said I, "whether

you know, or have ever heard of one Paul Phillips."

There was a roguish smile upon the man's face, to me altogether unaccountable, as he answered, "Sure enough, sir, I knows the person perfectly well."

"I desire very much then," said I, endeavouring to appear as composed as possible, though in reality I was strangely excited,—“I desire very much then to see the individual, to whom I have alluded. Do you think that the person is to be found !”

“Oh ! surely, sir—sure to be found—the house ben't very far from this—I will go myself, sir, if you like.”

“Do—do, my good friend—I have a particular reason for wishing to see this person alone for a few minutes, and I will thank you very much if you can contrive to accomplish my wishes.”

“Oh ! nothing more easy,” replied the landlord, “I will go myself ; I shall not be long ;” and the tavern-keeper quitted the room still smiling, why I knew not, most facetiously.

I walked up and down the sanded parlour in a miserable state of nervous excitement. I thought that I was now upon the point of making a most important discovery—that the mystery which had perplexed me so much was now in a few moments to be cleared away. I thought that in a very

short time I should become 'the master of that knowledge which for years I had been panting to gain — the mists of doubt dispersed by the broad sunshine of entire conviction. Rapidly before the mirror of my mind passed in succession the forms of Michael, and Ella, and Lawrence, and Mrs. Moore, and Lady Euston, and Mr. Anstruther. Then I beheld them all grouped together — the one with the other inextricably interwoven. There was indeed a most tangled web, but I thought that it would soon be unravelled, "*Paul Phillips knows,*" I repeated again and again as I walked up and down the apartment, "He knows all — I am soon to see him — he will tell me, and then I shall know all."

I was sure of this. It never occurred to me for a moment that there might be many Paul Phillipses in the world, and that it was very doubtful, indeed, whether I had secured an interview with the right one. But mine was a very sanguine temperament, and small difficulties were easily overleapt.

I heard footsteps approaching the door, and I stood still. I had braced up my nerves for the interview, and I felt that I was now sufficiently collected to cross-examine Paul Phillips with all the dexterity of a practised counsellor. I had determined upon my plan of investigation, and I doubted not but that it would be crowned with

success. I thrust my hand into my pocket, and with the utmost satisfaction I felt the weight of my purse, and congratulated myself on its being well filled. I knew that I should have to make plentiful use of the "oil of palms," and I was prepared for a disbursement. How could I better expend my money, than upon the restoration of Michael and Ella Moore to their true position in society?

I turned my face towards the door in expectation of Paul Phillips's entrance. My heart beat somewhat quickly, but I felt perfectly composed. To be sure, there was no cause for alarm, and yet it was a critical moment. The door was opened, and the landlord entered, conducting a huge — *woman!*

"This, sir, is *Poll Phillips*—your servant, sir," and with an impudent smile upon his face, the rascal was about to close the door and to depart; when I called him back, exclaiming in a towering passion,

"I asked you, sir, for *Paul Phillips* — a man, not a woman — what do you mean? I tell you what, landlord, I've a good mind to chastise you for your impudence — to bring that creature," and I moved towards the door, without finishing the sentence, as I was anxious to beat a retreat.

"I beg your honour's pardon," said the landlord, "I hope no offence, but I thought you said

Poll Phillips — I don't know ever a Paul — may be if you ask the lady, sir, she will tell you whether there be any of her family who carry the name of Paul."

But I was in no wise disposed to ask the lady any questions. I was disappointed, disgusted and ashamed of myself. I felt that I was in a ridiculous position, and all I desired was to escape. The woman began to abuse me for having made a fool of her and of myself at the same time ; so I gave her a peace-offering in the shape of half-a-crown, and paid a similar compliment to the landlord, though I well knew that Poll Phillips' coin would find its way into his treasury. Having done this, I ran out of the house, congratulating myself upon my escape, but lamenting the utter failure of my schemes.

CHAPTER VII.

DARKNESS VISIBLE.

Blest spirit of my parents,
Ye hover o'er me now ! ye shine upon me !
And like a flower that coils forth from a ruin,
I feel and seek the light I can not see.

COLERIDGE.

Her name — her birth — her home, he never knew ;
And she — *his* love was all she sought to know.

BULWER'S *Milton*.

“ HAVE you had any letters from Michael ? ” asked Ella, two days after Mrs. Moore's funeral, as I entered their little sitting-room, and inquired after the health of the invalid.

“ He promised that he would write,” said Lawrence, “ on the evening of the funeral — but he has not.”

“ At least not to us,” said Ella, “ but, doubtless, you have heard from him, Gerard.”

"I have."

"And what does he say?" inquired Ella, in an earnest tone of voice.

"That Sir Reginald Euston has been marvelously kind to him, and that he is living in Sir Reginald's house."

"I do not wonder at any thing in the way of generosity that Sir Reginald does," said Lawrence. "I shall never forget his kindnesses to me when I was a boy; he was more like a brother to me than any thing else in the world."

And I said within myself, "How little think you, Larry, that he *is* your brother-in-law."

But Michael's letter contained much food for anxious reflection — much matter that I was unwilling, at this season, to communicate to his brother and sister. He had discovered the history of his supposed mother, and of her relationship to Lady Euston. In an old oaken box, he had found a bundle of letters addressed to Colonel Kirby — they were from his wife, written about a year after marriage, when he was absent on foreign service, and they contained expressions of intense affection, and promises of the most faithful devotion. It would seem that Colonel Kirby, after the fall of his wife, had sent back these letters, intending them as instruments of the keenest reproach, and such they must have been, for Mrs. Moore, with all her frailties, had not a heart of stone; but why she

had preserved them it was difficult to determine ; perhaps she had been prevented from destroying them by a species of superstitious awe, perhaps from certain lingering feelings of affection for her injured husband. However, Michael discovered them in the old chest, recognized the hand-writing of his mother, perused the letters with intense interest, and then carried them to Sir Reginald Euston, who cleared up the little doubt remaining in Michael's mind by a full narrative of the events which I had detailed to him but a few days before.

But this was not all. In the same chest Michael had discovered a rectangular parcel, which wore the likeness of a box, folded round with white paper, whereon were written these words "For Michael and Ella, to be opened in the hour of need," this parcel Michael had opened, and he found that the paper contained a jewel-box.

He broke open the box, and therein he beheld jewels which seemed to his inexperienced eyes to be of surpassing value. There were neck-laces, bracelets, ear-rings, made up of many costly stones, and elaborately worked gold. He examined them ; most of them bore the initials M. C. P. in delicately small characters. What could this mean ? There was likewise a portrait of a young man, set in gold, on the other side of which was braided, beneath a glass, a quantity of brown hair. "I have shown this portrait to Sir Reginald,"

added Michael, "and the characters wherein he traced the sentence, were tottering and almost illegible, like the writing of one palsy-stricken, and he declares that both the outlines and the expression of the face, in an extraordinary degree resemble mine. Whose portrait can this possibly be? It is evidently the likeness of a gentleman; not of one who could ever have served in the army, as a gunner of artillery. Oh! my dear friend, these things have indeed distracted my mind painfully. I look into the future, and I see nothing but doubt, and uncertainty, — shall I ever cease to wander on in darkness? — shall I ever know the history of my birth? I write this with the full conviction, that I am not the son of Sergeant Moore, yet I know not why, for it is not impossible, — I am in a maze, and I fear that I shall never be extricated."

Of all these things Larry knew nothing. He was ignorant of the strange suspicions that had entered the breasts of his brother and sister, — he had never suspected himself of being any other than he seemed to be. Nor had I; for I was certain that he, at least, was the child of Mrs. Moore. But this certainty made it the more imperative upon me to acquaint him with the history of his mother's life and of his relationship to Lady Euston.

I resolved therefore, that I would do this, upon

the first fitting opportunity, when after his restoration to health, I might be enabled to converse with him alone. I wished also to speak to Ella in private, but I knew not how to accomplish this. I was perplexed; for both Lawrence and Ella expected me to show them Michael's letter, and this I deemed it expedient not to do.

But ere I took my leave of them on that day, it occurred to me that there was nothing in the letter, which I had any reason to conceal from Ella, as she was acquainted with Michael's suspicions, and had harboured feelings of a similar nature herself. So when I quitted the room, I whispered her to follow me, and in the passage I gave her the letter. "Show it not to Lawrence," I said.

On the following morning, I received two letters, — one from my uncle, Pemberton, and the other from Edwin Anstruther. The former I had visited more than once, since my arrival in the metropolis, and now he wrote, begging me to bring my sick friend, and his two nurses, to the Rectory. "This good man had been strangely interested by my account of poor little Beau-pied, and he longed to have the child beneath his roof, that he and Emily might instil into her mind the christian principles, which none had ever attempted to plant there, until Ella set about the task. "Bring them to me," wrote my good uncle, "and we will endeavour to make them happy. I fear

that your friend Lawrence, too much resembles his mother, — but still we may save him, Gerard, and bring the stray sheep again to the shepherd and the flock. Bring them to me, my dear boy, they all of them require a home, and my house, to the fatherless and the motherless, is now, and ever shall be thrown open.”

I took this letter with me to the invalid's lodging, and for the first time I found him alone. Ella was fitting on some clothes which she had been making for poor little Beau-pied. “Well, Larry, you are so much better,” said I, “that I think we might move you into the country.”

“What! to Grass-hill?”

“Not quite so far as that, but to my uncle Pemberton's: he has invited you all to take up your abode in his house.”

“What! Beau-pied, Ella, and all?”

“Yes,” said I. “Well, think about it, Larry; but tell me now, since I have found you alone, all you know about this little Beau-pied.”

A dark cloud gathered upon Larry's brow, as he answered in a tone of impatience, “What is it that you desire to know?”

“Who is she?”

“I wish that I could tell you, — I wish that she had so much knowledge, herself. She is now to me as a little sister, — an adopted sister, — I love

her very dearly, and when she is old enough, I will make her my wife."

"And until then?"

"She shall be to me as a sister. She is now but a little child, innocent as she is ignorant. I found her amongst the players, a dependent thing, an orphan with none to protect her. I pitied her, and more than once I saved her from the whip of the manager,—the manager was strong and cruel."

"I know his strength and his cruelty too well."

"You, Mr. Doveton?"

"Yes, I have felt it—I have made woeful experience both of his cruelty and his strength. Now tell me, Larry, when you left Grass-hill, where did you go to join the players?"

"To Waterton." This was a town about ten miles distant from Merry-vale, upon the high-road to the metropolis.

"That accounts for my not having found you—but we will talk of these matters anon. You say that little Beau-pied is an orphan?"

"To all intents and purposes," replied Larry. "Her reputed mother, who brought her, when she was quite a little child, into the company to play the part of Cupid or Tom Thumb, died about three years ago,—and left her in the charge of Mr. Centaur. The manager found her services indispensa-

ble to the troop, and in consideration of these services, he supported her. I doubt not but that the old ruffian waxed very wroth when he found that we had taken our departure in company, for I imagine that we were the main stays of the concern."

"And does no one know the parentage of the child?"

"No one that I could ever find. They all seemed to think that she was well-born and did not belong to the woman, who died; but they did not concern themselves about other people's affairs, and therefore they asked her no questions. The poor little thing was miserable amongst them, for she lived in a perpetual state of fear and trembling, and she was naturally the most timorous creature I ever beheld in my life. I fought one or two battles for her — I pitied her and she was grateful to me — in time we began to love one another. Your appearance in the booth expedited our flight, but we had already resolved upon departing and seeking occupation elsewhere. I wish, Gerard, that I could put her to school, until she is old enough to be married."

"My uncle Pemberton will take care of her," said I, "and his precepts, combined with the example of my cousin Emily, will not fail, I am sure, to render her very fit for all the duties of a wife."

According to my view of things there was something very noble and generous in Larry's conduct throughout this transaction. Doubtless, my friend Smith would have designated it in the highest degree preposterous and absurd; but I, looking only to the abstract nobility of Larry's motive, and never pausing to reflect for a moment upon the feasibility of his designs, was filled with rapture as I contemplated this beautiful example of magnanimous devotion. My eyes glistened with tears, and my voice faltered, as I took Lawrence by the hand, and said to him, "You are a noble fellow, Larry, and deserve a statue of brass for this act. You will have your reward; depend upon it — depend upon it, you will have your reward."

As I said this, Ella and the little player-girl entered the room together. "Do you think, Ella," said I, "that you could persuade yourself to leave this fine city in a day or two?"

Ella looked at me as though she scarcely comprehended the meaning of my question, and answered, "I shall be delighted to leave the city, but not to leave my brother whilst he is sick."

"But I mean, to leave it *with him*."

"Oh! in that case," cried Ella, her eyes glistening with joy as she spoke, and her whole face wearing an aspect of delight, which it had not worn since the death of her mother, "in that case we cannot leave it too soon."

“What ! do you not like it, Ella ?”

“Oh ! Gerard, how can you ask me ?—does anybody like London ! does anybody dwell in the city who can manage to live in the country !”

I smiled at the simplicity of Ella’s questions, and answered, “Thousands and tens of thousands.”

“I should really have thought,” said Ella, “that none were living here but by compulsion. I should have thought that this great smoky metropolis numbered amongst its inhabitants only those who are called hither by the nature of their avocations. It is quite an enigma to me, Gerard, that any one should live here from choice.”

“But London *has* its advantages too, Ella.”

“It may, but I have not yet found them,” returned Ella, smiling as she spoke ; and then assuming a more serious demeanour, she continued, “I acknowledge, Gerard, that I have been more astonished than anything else by what I have seen in London. The inhabitants of the town, appear to me a totally distinct set of people from those I used to see in the country. I sit at the window sometimes, and I see things which make my heart die within me. I had no idea that people were so wicked.”

“Why, what have you seen, Ella ?”

“I have seen drunken men and *women*, too, Gerard, reeling along the streets. I have heard God’s holy name taken in vain by children who can scarcely articulate. I have seen men fighting

with one another, and beating dumb animals unmercifully,—and many other things beside, which have made my flesh creep with disgust. Oh! Gerard, how heartily do I wish that circumstances had never brought me to London! Before, I used to think nobly of my fellows, but now I cannot help pitying and despising them.”

“Nay, Ella, not despising them, I hope.”

“Perhaps, I ought to use another word, something that means the opposite of *admire*. It is wrong to despise anything, I know; Mr. Wordsworth tells us that it is wrong.”

“And who is Mr. Wordsworth?” asked Lawrence.

“A very great poet,” replied Ella, “and he tells us, as well as I can remember,

—— that he who feels contempt
For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never tried — that thought with him
Is in its infancy — ”

“I don’t quite agree with that,” remarked Lawrence,—“but tell me, Beau-pied, what do you think about this visit to the country?—a gentleman, Mr. Doveton’s uncle, has been good enough to ask us all to stay with him.”

Little Beau-pied’s head drooped, and she was silent.

“Why, what is the matter, dear?” asked Lawrence.

The little girl lifted up her head, and replied in hurried accents, "Oh! I will go any where with you."

"But you would sooner stay here?" said Lawrence.

"No — no — yet, perhaps, I would; I am a silly little fool, Lawrence, and I scarcely know what I would sooner."

"Nay, nay, but you have some reason — come, speak out, no harm was ever yet done by speaking out."

"Well then," said the little girl, in a faltering voice, and with an embarrassed air, "I will tell you, though I know that it is foolish, and I almost think it is wrong. I like to have you all to myself, and where there are so many people, you will have no time to bestow upon me; besides, I am afraid of strangers — I am uneasy, when I am with them, and they stare at me and ask me such strange questions, and wonder who I can be; but this is all very foolish I know, and it will be good for you to go into the country."

"You need not be afraid of my uncle Pemberton," said I, "nor of my cousin Emily, I am sure. You will love them as soon as you know them, for they are the kindest people in the world."

"That they must be," cried Ella, "or they would never have invited us; utter strangers and poor children as we are."

“Then, Ella, I am sure that you will consent. My cousin Emily is dying to see you—I prophesy that you will be *such* friends!”

“I shall be delighted.”

“And you, Lawrence—and you little Beau-pied;—then it is all settled; I will take you there to-morrow—and on the next day I set out for Charlton Abbey.”

“For Charlton Abbey?”

“Yes, Ella—yes. Mr. Anstruther has summoned me, and I must go.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PAINTER OF NATURE.

His was the hand — oh! no, no — not the hand,
 The mighty soul that made the canvass breathe,
 And gave it power to make — to charm — to awe,
 Nature and Truth his guides.

MS.

THE letter, which I received from Astruther, was full of entreaties to visit him immediately. He described himself as being ill both in body and in mind; he said that now, more than ever, he needed the assistance of my companionship, — he had something of importance to communicate to me, and he felt that my presence at Charlton Abbey though only for a few days, would have a most salutary influence upon his mental, and consequently upon his physical, condition. “I will not keep you prisoner,” he added, “for many days in

these dreary dungeons — I will emancipate you very shortly, dear Gerard; so do not be afraid to come, thinking that you will never escape. I have something to tell you, that I have not the heart to commit at this moment to paper. I am very wretched indeed without you, — I am solitary, in the very ‘slough of despond,’ and my heart, far away from that which it loves, has nothing to do but to feed upon itself.”

What answer could I return to this letter, but a promise to set off without delay for Charlton Abbey? and such was the answer returned.

But first of all, on the day following that on which I received poor Austruther's letter, I conveyed Larry Moore, and his delicate nurses, to the hospitable dwelling-house of my uncle. Oh! never was anything more beautiful and affecting, than the kindness of my uncle Pemberton, and my cousin Emily. It was enough for that good man to hear of distress, to pity it, and to pity was with him to relieve it. Who was more welcome to partake of the good gifts, which Providence had bestowed upon him, than the orphan — the deserted, the neglected? There could scarcely have been a little group of persons more likely to awaken the sympathies of a truly benevolent heart, than that which I had introduced to my uncle. A sick youth, suffering for the errors, into which he had been led by a truant nature — a very prodigal

indeed, who, when he would have arisen, and gone to his home, found that he was without a home, and without a parent to receive him. Then a young orphan maiden, upon the very verge of womanhood utterly ignorant of the world's ways, pure, simple, innocent, and beautiful,—and, lastly, a poor neglected little girl, who knew not the parent-stock from which she sprung, and whose mind no presiding intellect, had ever attempted to exalt from the degradation of its original ignorance,—into whose ears, no words of religious assurance had ever been poured, whose lips had never breathed forth a single prayer to her Maker,—tossed about like a stray weed, upon the surface of the sea of life, with no one to control her, no one to guide her, no one to raise her above the brutes that perish. Could my uncle Pemberton look upon such a group as this, without stretching forth his hand to assist them? To reclaim the wanderer, to be a safe-guard to the innocent, and to nurture the neglected, was his delight; herein did he behold a glorious opportunity of performing these three great duties of a christian, and nobly did he perform them. He reclaimed the wanderer Lawrence, he was a safe-guard to the innocent Ella, and he nurtured the poor neglected little Beau-pied.

I set off for Charlton Abbey, on the following morning, by one of the western coaches. It was

my intention to proceed as far as S—, to sleep there, and then to continue my journey on the following morning. S— was the scene of my school-boy days; and in the town there resided one, whom I had often, since my pupilage had ended, most earnestly desired to see. This person was a Mr. Arundel — and he was a painter.

S— was within a morning's ride of Charlton Abbey — rather less than thirty miles distant; and Mr. Anstruther was to send a saddle-horse to meet me there, that I might ride to his house.

When I arrived at S—, I called upon Arundel; it was about six o'clock, and I found the painter, surrounded by his family, at tea.

Arundel was drawing-master at Dr. Good-enough's school. He was a man of singular genius, but it was the fashion amongst his pupils to think him mad. I had never been one of his pupils, because my parents had never permitted me to receive instructions in this, or in any other, supplementary branch of education, but I had always been one of his admirers, and he had honoured me with the title of his *friend*.

It often happened that some of my school-fellows would exhibit my drawings to Arundel; for rarely a day passed by, without my resorting to the pencil for amusement; and Arundel was always pleased to speak of them, in terms of the most flattering encomium. “Is it not a pity that

Doveton does not *learn*?" said one of his pupils to Arundel one day. "And does he not learn," asked Arundel, "daily? does he not receive lessons from the best of masters—the master who taught *me*?" "And who was that?" asked the boy wonderingly. "NATURE, you dunce!" returned Arundel.

Perhaps there never was a more intense admirer of Nature; perhaps there never was one who studied it more profoundly and imitated it more successfully than Arundel. Self-educated, he had drudged through no academy, nor followed any particular school. In the heart of a great wood—on the rocky margin of the wind-swept ocean—on the banks of a sinuous river, or in the centre of a vast plain, where some crumbling record of a by-gone age stood out in solitary grandeur against the sky—in such places had he studied—in such places had he learned. He was indeed the painter of nature, and he painted to all time. He was a great-minded man, and he was well content to forego his claims to present popularity; to no clap-trap artifices did he resort—to no vitiated tastes did he truckle—to no unworthy means of forcing himself into notice did Arundel ever once resort. "I will paint nature as I see it out of doors," said Arundel, "not as I see it on the walls of an exhibition room."

It is common with men of genius to be accused of prejudice, and it is said that they are too exclu-

sive in their admiration, often withholding it when it is due, and fixing too high a standard of excellence. Oh ! indeed, it is a fine thing for mediocrity to perk up such a charge as this. A common eye may see beauties in a sign-post, because it cannot discern beauty from deformity ; but it is a hard thing that genius should be condemned for possessing a more refined sense, a more exquisite capacity of discrimination. And thus did poor Arundel suffer ; it was said that he was prejudiced ; and worse than this, that his prejudice was the prejudice of envy. He admired not the works of his successful contemporaries ; he applauded not where others applauded. His criticisms were brief, but they were decisive. “ They do not paint *Nature*,” said Arundel.

He was almost unknown in the world ; he had never basked in the sunshine of patronage, nor was his name in the mouths of men. His pictures seldom travelled very far from the town, wherein they were painted ; and too many of them reposed beneath the roof of his own house. Once indeed a sweet voice came from a far land, praising him — a voice sweeter to the ear, than the applauses of a vast multitude — a voice which shall be spoken of anon — but seldom was Arundel doomed, to encounter any fate more cheering than neglect. The proud consciousness of his own merit sustained him, and in the midst of disappointment, he was

not a disappointed man. He was full of faith — “faith abiding the appointed time,” and it cheered him to think that truth and nature must ultimately triumph over fraud and convention. “I shall not live to see the time,” said Arundel, “but what I have done will be valued aright ere the day comes when there shall be no more painting. My works will not die with me; and posterity,” he added unconsciously imitating the fine language of the greatest man that ever lived — “posterity will do me justice, and to her will I bequeath my name.”

In the mean time Arundel was contented to pursue the humble avocation of a drawing-master in the town and neighbourhood of S——. This was what he called his “daily-bread-work;” he enjoyed it not, but he never murmured; he had a wife and a family — they wanted bread, raiment, lodging — so he worked for them. There was nothing in the calling to which he devoted himself in any way humiliating. It was doubtless sufficiently unpleasant to a man of fine genius, and exquisite sensibilities, day after day, to superintend the mincing efforts of finger-cramped young ladies, or the grotesque attempts of rude schoolboys, handling a pencil, as they would a cricket-bat, and outraging poor Nature in a series of revolting caricatures. I well remember that, at Dr. Goodenough’s, the boys were pleased to look upon Arundel, to use their own language, as “capital fun,” and they

were wont cruelly to make him a laughing-stock. They knew his peculiarities, and his prejudices too well, and, therefore, they had little difficulty in making him ridiculous, — they knew how to “set him a-going,” as they called it, and this was their delight. He was an enthusiast, and upon certain subjects, he could not speak with any measure of calmness; so to these “mad subjects,” would they direct the thread of Arundel’s discourse, and when he launched forth, as launch forth he would, in a heady current of impassioned eloquence, accompanying his words with an energy of action, which kept pace with the rapidity of his utterance, his eyes starting from their sockets, the veins of his temples swelling, and the foam whitening his lips, the boys would stand laughing around him, whilst some more impudent urchin than the rest, would dexterously append a “pig-tail,” of white paper to the collar of his coat, or write “Fool,” upon his back, in enormous characters of chalk.

These outbursts of passionate eloquence, laden with truth and beauty as they were, procured Arundel the appellation of a madman. The boys never troubled themselves to listen to what he said; it was enough for them that he talked with an uncommon rapidity, and made very strange faces whilst talking. Certainly it would have been more judicious in the painter if he had not wasted his fine things upon a parcel of mocking

school-boys; but who that is once mounted on his hobby ever pauses to reflect upon the fitness of his audience? Besides, he was the least suspicious of men, and when a question, relating to one of his favourite topics, was propounded to him, he always thought, in his innocence, that the inquirer was anxious to elicit information, and, therefore, with singular liberality he imparted whatsoever he possessed. As for myself, I often listened to Arundel, not in a spirit of mockery, but of admiration; I often conversed with him; I courted his society; he was kind to me, and I was grateful. I never suspected him of being mad, but that which was miscalled insanity I regarded, and still regard as *genius*. From his lips proceeded a multitude of fine things — no splendid commonplaces — no cut and dried antithetical epigrams; but observations almost startlingly original — seeming paradoxes, which when you probed them to their depths, stood the test of rigid inquiry, and were found to be pure, though deep-seated gold. I never ceased to converse with Arundel without feeling that I was richer for the conversation.

I was a great admirer of Arundel's landscapes, and most especially of his etchings, which he dashed off in the fine free style of Rembrandt, and in a manner which none but that great master, *meá quidem sententiá*, have surpassed. What chiefly struck me, as being super-eminently

excellent in all Arundel's works, was the management of his light and shadow. I do not think that any English landscape-painter, unless it be Wilson, has equalled him in breadth: there was no meretricious glitter in any of his pictures — no flickering, fire-work effects — no false allurements to catch the eye, and to dazzle the senses of the ignorant. He never sacrificed truth to prettiness, but painted objects as they appear in nature, not as they would appear when illuminated by coloured lamps, or in the vicinity of a chemist's shop. He was a great master of *chiaro oscuro*; he knew it, and knowing it, I am inclined to think he made the possession of this attribute too exclusively the test of a painter's qualifications. He could overlook any imperfections of design, anatomy, perspective, or colouring; but he could not forgive a man for offending in light and shade. This is a common trick of our self-love, and we must not be too harsh upon poor Arundel for encouraging it.

I might fill many more pages with an account of my painter friend and his peculiarities, but as he is not to appear very often upon the stage of my narrative, perhaps, already I have written too much. But I must now introduce him bodily to the reader — I found him, with his family, at tea.

He was about five-and-forty years of age, and he looked like a man of genius. There was a remarkable earnestness in his face; it was not hand-

some, but it was full of expression, thin and very decided in its outlines. His head was massive, like a block of marble, his eyes prominent and restless, his lips full and open — there was a dreamy look about them, such as we oft-times see in the portraits of very imaginative men. “The lips,” saith Shelley, “are the seat of the imagination” — a thin-lipped man is seldom or never a poet.

The painter sate by the fire-side, attired in a loose grey dressing-gown, which enveloped the whole of his spare figure, and opposite sate his wife, with a little child in her arms. How rarely is it that a man of genius meets with sympathy in his wife; but Mrs. Arundel’s whole soul was wrapped up in her husband and his pursuits. She was proud of his genius, and with a beautiful perseverance she exerted all her energies to comprehend it. She could feel the beauty of what he wrought, and in process of time she began to analyze her feelings. It was not enough for her to know that she was pleased — she must trace her pleasurable emotions to their source. She did so, and then she became a critic — she not only knew that her husband’s pictures were good, but she knew *why* they were good — she was a painter in all but the executive part, and most fit, indeed, to be the wife of a painter. Happy man! he had no cause to grieve over the imperfect sympathies of

them who dwelt with him. He was, as seldom is the case, "a prophet in his own country," a greater man at home than abroad; and I cannot help thinking that to this circumstance is attributable the absence of all that querulousness, which is so wont to display itself as an unseemly and humiliating appendage to the characters of such as have, or imagine that they have, claims upon the world, which the world is not ready to admit. Oh! indeed it wears the spirit to be neglected abroad, and to meet with no sympathy at home. Man needs support either on the one side or the other; but if the world despise him, and his own particular circle make a mock of him, his must be a strong spirit indeed, if in time it is not utterly broken.

The world was unkind to Arundel, and knowing this, I was ever wont to pity him. But when I beheld him in the bosom of his family, I envied the man I had pitied before. I do not think that I ever beheld a finer groupe than the family of the Arundels.

I speak in a moral, but even in a physical, sense, very much indeed was there to be admired. There sate Arundel, on one side of the hearth, surrounded by his own works, which graced the walls in every direction, and opposite to him sate his wife, with their youngest child in her lap—a baby scarce six months old, an unexpected visitor in the house,

but not on that account the less welcome. It was their only girl, and they worshipped it accordingly.

They had four sons—the eldest of whom was studying medicine under the most eminent practitioner in S——. Two of them, fine boys of thirteen and twelve were sitting side by side most lovingly, upon low stools in front of the fire, looking over a volume of prints, and apparently happy as princes. Upon a table near them was the tea-equipage, with preparations for a much more substantial meal than we are wont to see in the houses of the fashionable. A ham, sundry jars of preserves, toast, cakes and bread in abundance were awaiting the discussion of these early diners, and looked to me very far from uninviting. I need not say that I was welcomed most heartily by the painter and his interesting family; and that I sate down to partake of their evening fare with the most pleasurable emotions that can be imagined. Better, oh! much better a homely meal like this than the ostentatious banquets of the great. Of all parades in the world, there is none which I nauseate more thoroughly than the parade of eating.

“You see me here,” said the painter, in tones of natural gaiety, “with all my jewels around my neck. Nay, look not around the walls”—(for I had mistaken his meaning, and I glanced as he spoke, at the pictures which hung around the room)—“but

towards the fire — *there* are my jewels — I speak not of my works, but of my children — not of my own pictures, but of God's."

"Ah! 'Nature's fresh pictures newly done in oil,' as a quaint but fine old writer has expressed it."

"Yes; true — may I ask whose words they are? Bishop Earle's. I am by nature inquisitive, and whenever I hear a quotation I long to be acquainted with the name of the author. You were ever famous for quotations, and often astonished me by your strange powers of memory, especially in the retention of poetry."

"But my memory," said I, "is very exclusive. It will not remember facts — it will have nothing to do with dates — it abjures whatever is *square* and systematic. I can do nothing with it in such cases. I can remember whole pages of poetry, but not three consecutive figures — I break down at arithmetic entirely."

"Oh! that is because the imaginative faculty, like Aaron's rod, swallows up within you all other faculties," returned Arundel. "Are you still as fond of poetry as ever?"

"Yes — but I have a new set of authors."

"I am glad of it — for I think that in your boyhood you got into rather a bad set, — you were dazzled by the false glitter of certain meretricious performances, and mistook that for sterling gold,

which was in reality the flimsiest tinsel. You forsook the natural for the artificial, and were a much devoted disciple of the Rose-and-Bulbul school of poetry—not only admiring, but imitating, what it was safe neither to admire nor to imitate. I can remember how indignant you once were with me, for not being ravished with ‘The Light of the Harem.’ You said that I was prejudiced, and made a point of condemning whatever the world had judged worthy of praise. You don’t think so now, I perceive. Well I’m glad that you have got rid of such desperate company, as the Houris, the Peris, and the Goules.”

“I have become a disciple of Wordsworth’s.”

“Ah! he will teach you to think. The most that your Rose-and-Bulbul friends ever did was to cause certain pleasant vibrations to act upon the tympanum of your ear. It was rhyme without reason altogether—like the nonsense verses which boys make at school.”

“Nay, now you go too far;—but even granting this, is not the effect produced by the melody of such verse at least equal to that of music which is altogether sound?”

“No, Doveton, in this you are palpably wrong. All good music—all music that is worth listening to, has just as much sense as it has sound. You know that we have a musician in the family, of whom we are not a little proud. I think that he

will best overthrow your arguments by sitting down to the piano after tea. I wonder that you are silent, William," he added, addressing his second son, who sate upon a stool at the foot of his father, "whilst Mr. Doveton tells us that music is meaningless, and appeals only to the ear."

"Oh!" replied the boy, blushing, and at the same time smiling as he spoke, "I think that we can convince him to the contrary."

"Convince me by an exemplification of your theory," said I, "and it will delight me to be convinced. Already do I feel that I was wrong." Then turning to Arundel, I continued, "You have a promising musician in your family, and a little artist too, have you not? But where is your youngest son, and what are his qualifications?"

"We expect him home from school every minute," replied Arundel, and he laughed as he added, "little Arthur is something of an universal genius, for he excels in whatever he attempts. He is only eleven years old, yet at school he is first in Latin and in French. I have promised to give him a watch when he brings me home a certificate that he is first in French, Latin, and Greek."

And Arundel had scarcely uttered these words, when the door was thrown open, and a little fair-haired boy, his cheeks rosy with health and exercise, and his eyes glistening with excitement, came bounding into the room, and crying out, in a ring-

ing voice, musical with glee, "The watch, papa! the watch—I have gained the watch—for I'm first in Greek!"

I know not which was most delighted—the father or the child, at this moment. Arundel kissed the little boy—his mother and his brethren did the same, nor could I help following their examples.

I was very much affected—blindingly the tears rushed to my eyes. I longed for a wife and children.

When tea was over, Arundel at my request placed before me a portfolio of drawings. Then he took from another folio an engraving from some designs of Michael Angelo's, and bade his third son Henry to copy it. William was dispatched to the piano; Arthur took a book from one of the shelves, and Arundel himself seized a pencil, and began very assiduously to draw.

The young musician, with a degree of skill which to my unscientific ear seemed extraordinary, played one of Bellini's most elaborate pieces, whilst I looked over the beautiful drawings of his father. "Are you convinced?" said Arundel, when the last note of the music had ceased to vibrate upon my ear.

"Perfectly," said I, "there was a *history* in that music—legible, if I may so speak, as in the pages of a book—and beautiful ear-reading it is."

‡ This was rather an absurd speech, but it was

intelligible, and the young musician was delighted with his success.

Then I rose from my seat to mark the progress of his brother, the little artist. He was copying with great boldness and decision a figure, which appeared to me violently exaggerated. Arundel declared that it was a masterpiece, and began to discourse upon his favourite subject — the all-engrossing *chiaro oscuro*.

“But it is all out of drawing,” said I.

“It is Michael Angelo’s.”

“I can’t help that. It is decidedly out of drawing, and it is as great a fault to outrage nature in the drawing, as in the light and shadow, of a picture. Did you ever see such limbs as these — they are monstrous — the grossest exaggerations I ever beheld in my life — they, indeed, outstep the modesty of nature — the figures are not like men.”

Here little Arthur, who was sitting beside his artist brother, glanced at the picture, and said in tones of mingled archness and diffidence, “I think that I know why —”

We urged the little fellow to speak — he hesitated, hung down his head, blushed, and then outspoke. He was not certain — and yet he thought — that the figures had been painted for a convex ceiling, and now that they were engraved on a flat surface, they necessarily appeared all out of drawing.

"There cannot be a doubt of it," I exclaimed, delighted with the acuteness of my young friend. "You have divined the true cause of these seeming exaggerations," and I patted the little fellow on the head. "Now I might have puzzled over this till dooms-day, without getting at the kernel of the nut."

"Oh!" said the little boy, "it was all accident. If I had been asked I should very likely not have been able to answer. Or at any other time, perhaps, I might have racked my brain for hours without getting at the truth. It seemed to come upon me unawares, and it is nothing so wonderful after all."

The wonder was, that his father and myself should have been so stupid; but I thought of the "*aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*," and then addressing myself to the little artist, I said, "Should you like, my boy, to be a painter by profession?"

The boy shook his head: and I asked, "What then?"

"A merchant."

And Arundel then said to me, "Much as he loves drawing, and fine as is his genius, he always shakes his head, when I mention the art to him as a profession, which, indeed, I only do jestingly, for I love him a great deal too well, to desire that he should follow in my footsteps. He has set his heart upon being a merchant; why I know not,

unless he is anxious to be something, the very antipodes of a painter, and that he thinks by adopting a profession, which there is little prospect of his loving much, there will be less pain in the event of a failure, which is a very sensible view of the case. I encourage him in these notions, for I know right well that there is no greater enemy to a man's peace of mind than ambition, whose inordinate cravings, day or night, will not suffer him to rest. Never suffer that wily serpent to creep into your heart, Doveton—never aspire to be greater than you are. Mine is the language of woeful experience. I have endured, much and manifold have been my struggles— I have carried about a fire in my bosom for years, but now I am calmer, more patient, more wise. I have endeavoured to stifle, or at least to discipline the wild longings of my ever-craving heart, which like the daughters of the horse-leech, is always crying "Give, give." The time was, when day and night I thought and I dreamt of fame—now I do not; I rest satisfied with the knowledge that what I have done has been done well. I have wedded myself to the art, and for her sake I will labour on, seeking no reward—no alien end. It is something to be able to say "I have done nothing unworthily—I have never outraged nature, nor violated truth, nor laid the net of artifice to ensnare the ignorance of the world."—There are

my etchings—look at them well, and tell me whether each one is not a faithful copy of nature. You may have seen things more delicately finished—the gravers of other men may have wrought more minute lines, and produced a more microscopic result; but look at these etchings—now pause here—can you tell me the time of day, which this effect endeavours to represent.”

“Undoubtedly—the sun has just set—it is the twilight of a summer evening—what a beautiful repose there is in the landscape!—how still and peaceful do all things seem!—

Lapped in the quiet of the lulling air.

You fancy that not a leaf is stirring—that there is not a ruffle upon the surface of the clear, pellucid stream, which “wanders at its own sweet will,” between thickly-wooded banks, so that only the noon-day sun can burnish its cool waters. Night, methinks, is coming on apace.—A few faint streaks”—

“Of what Göthe calls ‘far departed light,’ ” interrupted the painter, “are visible—do you know Göthe’s writings, the ‘myriad-minded’ Göthe, as he is termed?”

“Oh! yes, Werter and Faust—but above all, my beloved Wilhelm Meister.”

“I am thinking,” said the painter, thoughtfully, the energy of his manner suddenly subsiding, and a placid expression of countenance, supplanting

the earnest look which lately pervaded his features, "I am thinking of setting out on a pilgrimage to Weimar, that I may visit the dear old man."

"What! are you such an enthusiastic admirer of his works, that you would—"

"O! no," exclaimed Arundel, "he is an admirer of *my* works. I have read nothing of his, but the "Sorrows of Werter," and two or three letters he has written me."

"Written you!"—

"Yes, it happened that a collection of my etchings, by some accident found their way to Germany, and Göthe became the purchaser of them. He wrote to me, and with the utmost condescension and kindness, did he express his admiration of what I had done, comparing my works with Rembrandt's and requesting me to send him forthwith other specimens of my graphic genius. I am almost ashamed to confess my ignorance, but, in truth, when his first letter reached me, I scarcely knew that there was such a person in the world."

"He is the greatest man in Europe," I exclaimed, "and the first judge of the fine arts in the world."

"Oh! I am so glad to hear you say so,—but here are the letters for you to read. I think that it is sweeter to be praised by such a man, than to be lauded by a million of dullards. Now, are not they the letters of a master-mind? How much is

there expressed in a few sentences, and how strikingly beautiful are the epithets he employs. Each epithet of his conveys more than a sentence by another. I was showing these letters to the bishop the other day, for he also is pleased to admire my humble works,—I was showing them to the bishop, and I said, ‘None but Göthe could have written such letters.’ And the bishop said, ‘I think, Mr. Arundel, that you do not express yourself aright, you mean that none but such a man as Göthe could have written these letters.’ And I answered, ‘But where, my Lord, will you find such a man?’ You will think me a vain coxcomb I am afraid, but praise from a far country, and from such a quarter is very sweet indeed, it compensates for the neglect of the world,—it assures me of what I was at one time beginning to doubt, that I have not set an undue value upon my own powers, that I have not through many years been cherishing a destructive self-delusion. Pardon my vanity—my egotism—I am little accustomed to praise, and when I think of it, I cannot balance my mind—I cannot adjust the scale of thought. But go on; I have two or three more folios, and whilst you are looking over them, William shall play us an epic of Mozart’s.”

And thus pleasantly passed the evening. Music, painting, and poetry (for I had brought with me a copy of Shelley’s *Posthumous Poems*, which I

intended as a present to the painter, and from it I read aloud the famous translation of the witch scene in *Faust*), combined to furnish forth a rich intellectual banquet. Book after book of Arundel's drawings, did I turn over admiringly, but regretfully, for I was compelled by the shortness of the time allowed me, only to glance at what I would have dwelt upon, and studied. I had permission to select from the number any two or three that might happen especially to strike me; and this task of selection was not one of the most easy.

At length, in one of the portfolios which contained almost exclusively a series of views taken in the Pays-Bas, interspersed with a few occasional drawings of costumery, I alighted upon the portrait of a beautiful female, whom both from the style of her features and her dress, I judged to be a young English lady.

I looked at this picture again and again—it was evidently a portrait, not a creation of the painter's brain, and looking at it, my heart beat very quick, and my whole frame thrilled with strange emotion. In sooth it was a beautiful picture, and I could have loved the possessor of such a face. But was this all? No, reader, no — this was *not* all — for the portrait before me was the very image of my own Ella Moore.

My voice faltered very much, and my whole

frame trembled, as I said to the painter, "Arun-
del, whose picture is that?"

He looked at it, pondered for a few moments, and then replied, "Ah! I remember — I took the sketch of it on board the *Trechshuyt* that plies, or used to ply, between Bruges and Ghent. It was a young English lady I think, and I was struck by her extreme beauty.—It was the most seraph-like face I ever beheld. I am not quite sure that I have caught the expression. I remember that it was very difficult to catch. It is so very long since I did it, that I almost wonder that I should remember it all. But now that I see the picture, all the circumstances connected with it rise up distinctly in my memory — and I recollect very well having drawn it."

"The name?"

"Oh! that I don't remember—is there no name at the back of the picture."

"None — but how long ago?"

The painter pondered a little, and then made answer, "About twenty years."

"And you don't think that you can remember the name of the lady — I wish that you could — she is perfectly beautiful, and 't shall certainly select this to be my own."

"You are welcome to it; and if you will excuse me for a minute, perhaps, I shall be able to tell you the name of the strange lady; as I think that

in my painting-room I have the old book, wherein I made the rough sketch from which this picture was taken. I was obliged to do it, you know, upon the sly, for I had not the pleasure of the lady's acquaintance."

Here Arundel quitted the room, and I was left to await his return in a most unpleasant state of nervous excitement. Again I looked at the picture; it was a breathing likeness of Ella Moore. The hair was differently arranged, and the costume altogether unlike what Ella was accustomed to wear. But still it appeared to me that there was a wondrous likeness between the face of my beloved, and that which was represented in the picture. Perhaps, had Ella been present, I should have found sundry points of dissimilitude, but in her absence I saw none, but in the style of her hair and drapery.

Arundel was not long absent; but it seemed to me that he had been gone an age, when he re-entered the room, and exclaimed, "Well, Doveton, I have succeeded at last."

"And the name?" I said, almost breathless with excitement.

"*Miss Penruatlock*," replied Arundel.

"And her Christian names?"

"*Mary Catherine* — I read them, I suppose, upon the lid of a box, or on the cover of a book."

CHAPTER IX.

THE CLAMOROUS VOICE OF REMORSE.

In these strange, dread events,
Just Heaven instructs us with an awful voice,
That conscience rules us e'en against our choice.
Our inward monitress to guide or warn,
If listened to, but if repelled with scorn,
At length as dire Remorse she re-appears,
Works in our guilty hopes and selfish fears.

COTTERIDGE.

On the following day, by one o'clock, I had entered the park-gates of Charlton Abbey. I found Anstruther somewhat altered for the worse since I had last seen him, which was only about ten days before. He was thinner and much paler; his voice was more feeble, and his step more unsteady. He had been ill — very ill, he told me, and then he added in a touching voice, which brought the ever-ready tears to my eyes, “I am fast sinking

tor. I do not think that I ever beheld a lovelier cluster of faces.

Up started they all to welcome me. My cousin Emily was at the door in a moment. "Come along, Gerard—we were just talking about you.—Come to the fire, you must be cold.—Papa has gone out, so I am your hostess, and my business it is to see you comfortable. Now off with that great coat—what a terrific weight it is, to be sure—and that great huge worsted thing round your neck. Now, come to the fire, Gerard, for you at length wear the aspect of humanity—before, you looked, for all the world, like a great outlandish, polar bear."

I kissed my pretty little cousin, and I longed to kiss Ella Moore.

"Oh!" thought I, "if Mary Penruddock was indeed lovely as Ella Moore, I wonder not that poor Anstruther found it difficult to keep himself from idols."

"I was just going to read to them," said Michael, "when we heard your ring at the bell. 'Who can that be?' said Miss Pemberton. 'Oh! if it should be Mr. Doveton!'" cried Ella; and I looked out of the window, and behold! Mr. Doveton it was."

I took a low stool, and seated myself in the centre of the group:—"Oh! I like sitting thus,"

I exclaimed, for they wished to extend their circle that I might sit, like them, upon a chair. "Oh! I like sitting thus exceedingly, for I am so thoroughly fenced in with friends—I am so literally in the very midst of you all. Now, I wont interrupt the reading; give *me* the book, and I will read to you."

And I read, by the light of the blazing fire, some chapters of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Even Ella, sorrowful as she was, laughed over "the gross of green spectacles."

Then we prepared for dinner, and dinner came; and after dinner Emily sang and played to us, and the evening passed pleasantly away.

My uncle Pemberton came home at an early hour, as was his wont, that nothing might interfere with the duties of family devotion. He dismissed us all with a blessing, and then I retired to the solitude of my chamber.

I had not been long in my room when I heard somebody rapping at the door; "Come in," I answered.

It was Michael.

He had something, like a jewel-box, in his hand.

"I have come here," said he, "at this unseasonable hour, because, perhaps, it is the only time when we shall be able to converse in private. Oh! Gerard, how truly has it been said, that

'strange things are let out by death.' Who could ever have divined that my poor mother was the mother of Lady Euston? How astounded you must have been by the intelligence."

"Nay, Michael, I knew it all before."

"And whence did you learn it, Gerard?"

"From my uncle."

"Then he knows our history."

"Oh! well—he knew your mother, when she was Mrs. Colonel Kirby; and this makes him so much interested in you all."

"Then he must have known Colonel Kirby," exclaimed Michael, eagerly;—"Oh! Gerard, how fortunate is this."

"In what respect, Michael?"

"He can rid me," returned my friend, "of the painful uncertainty which distresses me; at least on one particular point. He can tell me whether or not this portrait is the likeness of Colonel Kirby." And as he said this, Michael took from the box, in his hand, a small golden-mounted miniature.

I looked at it. It was not the portrait of Colonel Kirby—but, it was the portrait of Edwin Anstruther!

I had expected this, for Michael had told me in his letter, that there was a miniature amongst the jewels, and I was certain that the jewels were Mrs. Anstruther's.

"They say," resumed Michael, "that the face is like mine; do you see the resemblance, Gerard?"

"I do, Michael; I certainly do. This is not Colonel Kirby's picture."

"How do you know?"

"I am sure that it is not. 'The Colonel was a dark-haired man. I have heard my uncle describe him."

"Do you think, then, that it is the portrait of my father?"

"*I do think so, Michael.*"

"What, of Serjeant Moore? I scarcely think, Gerard, that it looks like a non-commissioned officer."

"But I have heard my uncle," said I, evasively, "speak of this Serjeant Moore, as being a man of good family and education."

"How came he, then, a gunner of artillery?" asked Michael, eagerly.

"He quarrelled with his friends, and enlisted," said I.

"Then this may be his picture," returned Michael, thoughtfully; "but the jewels—they were not my mother's—"

"How know you?"

"They were not Mrs. Kirby's jewels, for they are many of them marked M.C.P."

“ And what was Mrs. Kirby’s maiden name?”

“ Her maiden name?—Ah! Sir Reginald told me—her maiden name—yes, it was *Pelham*.”

“ Then this accounts for it; Mary *something*, Pelham.”

“ No, Gerard, no—her name was not Mary—all her letters are signed Emily Kirby—who then is this M. C. P.?”

I was silent, and Michael continued, “ I think, Gerard, that you know more than you will tell me—but speak out, I beseech you, if you do. Oh! my best of friends, for such ever have you been, take compassion upon me, and aid me in my difficulties. Oh! Gerard, I was the happiest creature in the universe, before the wily dæmon of ambition whispered into my ear that I was not born to be a cottager. In my early boyhood, who more joyous than I—who more tranquil—who more contented? It was delight enough for me to live. Wherever I looked there was a blessing, wherever I went there was peace. At my up-risings, and my down-sittings, I was serene and happy. My dreams were of pleasant things, and my waking thoughts were without care. And thus I lived till I was nearly seventeen, when strange and unaccountable yearnings began to disquiet me. I felt the promptings of an unknown spirit within—of a spirit which, up to this

point, had slept. Then began I to be restless and unsatisfied. Nature was not what nature had been to me before. Its beauties and benignities did not steal into my heart unbidden; I was compelled to solicit them—I now subdued myself, as it were, to their influences, but formerly I had been subdued by them. Then did I feel that I was changed. Nature became a remedy—a solace—a protection—it was no longer the one delight of an untroubled breast. I had something to escape from; I was a fugitive, and nature was my sanctuary, not my home.

“Oh! Gerard,” continued my friend, “how much better, indeed, would it have been if those strange infantine reminiscences, concerning which we have spoken together already, had been suffered to remain dormant. But when I began to remember, I began to aspire, and I panted after a higher condition. I looked around me and I became a watcher of men. Before, I had been contented with regarding the inanimate works of the creation; and mankind, beyond the sphere of my own family, had been to me a sealed book. But now, though I mingled ~~not~~ with men, I scanned their outward peculiarities; I saw that I was not like others whom fortune had made my compeers. With the brutal and the unrefined I had no sympathy; I could not but feel that I was above them, that I was higher in the scale

of humanity than the common herd of cottage-born mortals. A loftier instinct was within me. I knew it—and then my peace of mind was gone.

“What I am, Gerard, I know. Who I am, would that it were permitted me to know. Some great mystery envelopes my birth. I am sure of it—my own and Ella’s recollections—certain words, which have dropped, at divers times, from the mouth of our reputed mother—this miniature, this box of jewels, all tend to strengthen my conviction. Now, Gerard, I ask you, and I implore you, to answer me, do you know more than I do of this matter?”

I was silent, for I knew not what to answer. I was in a painfully embarrassing situation—compelled either to tell a direct falsehood, or to touch upon matters, which I felt it would be dangerously premature to enter upon so early. I knew not which course to adopt; and I longed for some out-let of evasion.

But Michael could not brook the tardy coming of my answer; he was in a fever of impatience, and he continued to address me in a tone of rapid impetuosity. “Oh! Gerard, I implore you to speak; and yet your silence answers my question. You *do* know more of this matter—perhaps you even know who I am. Oh! tell me—at least you are acquainted, I am sure, with the original

of this picture. Gerard, upon this portrait I rely—if there be hope of tracing my parentage, upon this picture does that only hope rest.”

I was about to make answer, evasively—to equivocate in some specious fashion—when I heard the voice of Lawrence Moore at the door. “We had better now be silent,” said Michael, tremulously, and at the same time he concealed the miniature, and set the jewel-box upon my toilet-table. “Lawrence knows nothing of this, and therefore, we had better be silent.”

Larry entered the room, with a brisk step, indicative of the rapid improvement which his health had lately undergone. “May I have a share in the cozey,” said he, laughing, “for Mike has left me all alone in the room, and I a’nt very fond of my own company; being somewhat of a social turn. Neither am I sleepy, a bit—and I feel so hearty to-night—just in the way for a talk—so I thought that I’d pay you a visit, and see if my company be welcome. You may turn me out, if you like, directly; or, when you’ve had enough of me, bid me to be gone.”

I could not help smiling at Larry’s rough mode of introducing himself; but I told him that he was heartily welcome, and bade him to take a chair by the fire. Larry seated himself, thrust out his legs, crammed his hands into his pockets, and then began to sigh for — *a pipe*.

"I think," said he, "that I could be happy as a prince now, if I were but blowing a cloud," and then his lips began to move themselves as they had been used to do, when a pipe was pressed gently between them.

"I think," said I, laughing, "that you would astonish my uncle if you were to attempt to fumigate his house."

"Of course I can't think of it in earnest," returned Lawrence, "not in the least, whilst I am staying with your uncle. But it is such a very long time since I have enjoyed the luxury of a pipe — not since the fever came upon me. I have not been out yet to reconnoitre; but I dare say there's a public in the neighbourhood."

"But you won't think of going there, will you? My uncle —"

"Ay, there it is. Your uncle has been kind to me beyond all things, and, indeed, I'm heartily obliged to him; but I really begin already to feel rather sick of playing the gentleman. I was not cut out for such a life — I was never intended for a high-flyer. It may be all well enough in its way, when you've been regularly brought up to the thing; but to be dashed into the thick of it at once, and to have a straight-waistcoat clapped upon you. Every thing so clock-work and regular; nothing a bit liberty-like — none of the free-and-easy about it. I can't say that I admire the

sort of thing, so I think — now I beg you not to suppose that I am ungrateful for speaking in this way — I think, with your uncle's permission, that I shall make a bolt of it as quickly as possible."

"Oh! Larry, Larry!" cried Michael, reproachfully.

"Nay, Mike; don't look so sorry about it," resumed Larry, in a soothing voice; "I wouldn't have said any thing on the subject, if I had thought that it would make you uneasy. But you know as well as I do, dear Mike, that I am not cut out for a gentleman. Now I think that *you-are*, every inch of you; and as for Ella, she looks the lady full as well as any duke's daughter in the land. But I, though I an't amiss to look at, could never do a bit of gentlemanly in my life, and it's no use telling a lie about it — so Mike, I beg and intreat you not to look so down in the mouth."

Michael endeavoured to smile; but his heart was heavy-laden, and his brain was distracted with many contending thoughts. He looked at Lawrence; then at me, — his eyes glistening with tears all the while; and then, as though he were anxious to escape into solitude, that he might give free vent to his emotions, he bade God bless me, and hurried out of the room.

"Michael's a cup too low to-night," said Lawrence, when his brother was gone. "I could al-

most pipe an eye myself, to see him so down-hearted. Indeed, I'm getting soft and girlish, for I want something to stir me. This idle life won't do at all. I must go back to the players."

"Surely, Lawrence," I exclaimed, with a gesture of astonishment, "you have no such serious intention."

"Oh! but I have—it was nothing so bad, I assure you," returned Lawrence: "a good, free-and-easy sort of life; plenty of dashing fellows to keep company with us; all hurry, bustle and excitement—now in one place, now in another—always in the very midst of the fun. Besides, it's a pretty sure livelihood; and I'm a tolerable spec for a manager—with little Beau-pied I know that I could make my own terms; but I have my doubts about the poor little thing."

"Oh! Lawrence, do not throw yourself away in this reckless manner, I beseech you—think of Michael, and of Ella, and of little Beau-pied, and seek some other occupation."

"Ah! but that's not so easy, and I don't know what I am fit for. Besides, I don't know any thing else that I should like half so well. I am thinking that if I were to get a good engagement, I might manage out of my earnings to put little Bo-peep to school. I don't want to make the child work any more, for she hates exhibiting herself in public."

"I should have thought," said I, "that you had suffered enough from your player-freaks already."

"No — no — you are wrong there," said Lawrence, "I suffered for cutting the concern. If I had stuck to the business properly, I should never have been so near hopping the twig. But after I left the troop, I went to London, and lived a little while on my savings. I took a lodging for little Beau-pied and myself. She was rather a clog round my neck, but the poor dear thing was so fond of me, and I was so fond of the poor dear thing, that I would not have abandoned her for the world; so we two lived together like brother and sister, and for a little time we were tolerably comfortable. But money won't last for ever, and I soon found mine getting low. I scarcely knew what to do. There is no place so difficult as London to get work, though there is so much work to be done there. I used to go out in the streets looking about me, as though I hoped to find gold on the pavements, but I never returned home any richer. If it had not been for the child, I should have gone to sea, or enlisted, but for her sake I was obliged to stay at home."

"Well; as I was walking along the streets one day, who should come up with me but one of the old troop — a strange creature as ever lived in the world — the fellow, who was always our clown.

If ever there were a mixture of the knave and the fool in any one person, it was in him. He gave me a knowing wink of the eye, and would not let me pass on, as I would have done, without taking notice of the fellow. 'Don't fear my peaching,' said he, 'for I've quarrelled with the company, as you have; but come into the next lush-shop and have a booze, for the sake of old fellowship, my hearty.' So I went, for I had never any weighty objections against a pipe and a glass in my life.

"So we talked over old days, and my companion told me that he had flared up with the manager, and had a bit of a fight — old Centaur getting the best of it, of course, for the fellow is as strong as a Hercules, and so he had walked off from the troop, leaving them to fish for a clown. Well, as we continued to talk, we found that we were both of us, as you see, upon the same tack, wanting employment; and so we put our heads together to find out the best way of raising the wind. After some talk, having proposed half a hundred plans, and discovered that none of them were feasible, my companion suddenly cried out, 'If we had but a third we'd go glee-singing.'

"I did not think this a very bad scheme, for Paul had a thundering bass, and I could sing a tolerable second — so we began to talk it over at length, and my partner said, he thought that he

could muster a third — a young lad who had been a voyage or two to the Indies, but was rather tired of ship-board, and longing for something of a change. Well, to make my story short as possible, this youngster consented to join us; he had just the sort of voice we wanted, a nice, clear treble, and together we made up a very passable trio of glee-singers.

“It took us a few days to prepare for our undertaking — there was nothing against us but the weather, and that was bitter, for it was the month of November. But to it we went gallantly, and we made it answer even better than we expected. I can’t say much for the fun of it, however, for the night-work was terribly hard, and if it had not been for poor little Beau-pied, who lived pretty comfortably all this time, I don’t think that I could have gone through it all.

“But at length it made me dreadfully ill. The truth is, that I was obliged to *drink* — I could not have gone on without spirits; and what with one thing and another, after a month’s glee-singing, I was floored. I caught a terrible cold — and the cold brought on a fever; and then I was obliged to stay at home. I had saved a little money — for you would hardly believe how much we contrived to get together — we divided our earnings at the end of each week, and a pretty good round

sum we had. But when the fever came, there were no more earnings to divide — my money soon dwindled into nothing — I did not know what to do, so at last I wrote to my mother."

"But your companions," said I, "what became of them? Did they never visit you in your distresses?"

"The sailor-lad came once," replied Lawrence, "God bless him! and divided his purse with me; but never to this very day have I seen any thing more of Paul Phillips."

"*Paul Phillips!*" I exclaimed, starting from my chair as I spoke, "Paul Phillips! and was this the name of your companion?"

Lawrence looked at me wondering, and replied, "Yes, sure enough — that was his name. They used to call him Signor Paulo Philosopho in the play-bills, just in the same ridiculous way as they christened me Signor Laurentio."

"But know you where he lives?" I asked, in a voice of extreme eagerness. "Know you where the man is to be found?"

Lawrence stared at me, wondering what was the purport of these questions, and answered, "He used to have a lodging not very far from Shore-ditch Church — I don't know the name of the street, but it was over a spout-shop."

"A spout-shop! and what's that?"

"A pawn-broker's shop," returned Lawrence, smiling, as he spoke at my innocence, "and the man's name who kept it was Jones."

"Oh ! then I shall easily find him ; but tell me, Lawrence, did this man know that your real name is Moore ?"

"He did not know it at first," replied Larry, "for I called myself Lawrence in the troop, and I went by that name with my lodging-keeper ; but somehow or other after we became partners in the glee-singing business, I let out my real name, and I remember well that he questioned me about my parents, and hinted that he had known my mother."

"He did ! Then, as surely as my name is Gerard Doveton, this is the man, whom I have been burning to find."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CURTAIN UP-DRAWN.

How often have we guessed his lineage noble
And now 'tis proved —

* * *

These are high tidings—whom does guess his sire ?

TALFOURD'S *Ion.*

ROSE early on the following morning, and joined my uncle Pemberton in one of his accustomed sunrise promenades. As we went along, I took occasion to ask him what he thought of his young guests, and whether he had yet repented of his excessive hospitality.

“Not in the least, Gerard,” said my uncle, “for I know that I have done right. Besides, I have a large house, and why should its rooms be empty? From the mother of these children did I receive, in my young days, a world of kindness. I well remember once when I was lying sick—a young subaltern—with a fever at Gibraltar—that she would supply me every day, with those little comforts which a bachelor’s establishment cannot afford, and that when I was recovering, she would send her carriage to my quarters, that I might take a drive in it, every afternoon. I cannot forget these things, Gerard—I cannot forget that she helped me in my affliction.”

“Oh! uncle, with what truth is it written, ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it will return to thee after many days.’”

“But what think you, uncle,” I added after a pause, “of my friend Michael and his sister?”

“I think that they are as lovely samples of humanity as ever graced this beautiful earth—lovely both in body and in mind. I conversed with Michael yesterday, for several hours, and he delighted, at the same time that he astonished me. How beautiful, nay how grand, is the triumphant rising of innate power above the antagonism of circumstances. In a little sheltered nook, far away from cities, with no preceptor and only a few books, this youth, unaided and alone, has heaped up a

pile of the best knowledge. Gerard, I think that very soon I shall love this boy as a son."

"And Ella?"

"Oh! ask your cousin what *she* thinks of Ella Moore. I don't think that Emily will be very willing to lose her, for already does she love her new companion, as she would love an elder sister, if she had one. And Ella is so modest, so humble, so unassuming—deferring always to Emily, as one wiser and more accomplished than herself, and taking pleasure in contrasting her own ignorance with Emily's knowledge of certain subjects, which must have been mysteries to the cottagers of Grass-hill. I think that any parents might be proud of one so lovely, so graceful, so good, and—indeed I may add, so thoroughly lady-like as Ella.

"And Lawrence?"

"Circumstances must have been strangely against him, or it would be difficult to believe that he has risen from the same parent-stock as Michael and Ella. He is of a different order altogether—he lacks all the gentleness, all the delicacy of sentiment, which distinguishes his brother and sister. But he has been in situations, of all others the most disadvantageous to the progress of refinement. He has been made corrupt by the world."

"He is not what he was when I first knew him—yet, even then he was not comparable to his brother."

“His mind is differently organized. He does not lack high feeling altogether; indeed, there is a generosity of sentiment in his character, which borders very closely upon chivalry. Nothing, for instance, can be more noble than his conduct towards the poor little orphan, whom he has taken under his protection. I honour him and love him for that. Do you know what he purposes to do?”

“He talks about rejoining the players.”

“Oh! no—that will never do, Gerard—we must persuade him to think differently upon the subject; and the most persuasive thing of all others is the offer of some more advantageous situation. We must look about us and see what is to be done—but here come Emily and Ella.”

At breakfast I told the assembled party that I was about to set off for London, as soon as my meal was dispatched. “How very stupid of you,” said my cousin Emily, pouting her full lips as she spoke.

I looked at Ella Moore, and her face wore an aspect of disappointment. It pleased me—for when we are obliged to quit those whom we love, it is pleasant to feel that we shall be missed.

“We hoped that you would have remained with us,” said Ella.

“Yes, you provoking man,” cried my cousin Emily, looking at me with an expression of mock anger, which particularly became her little face;

“Ella and I had thoroughly built upon getting you to take us a walk, and now you are going to that great town. What business can you possibly have there?”

“I will depute Michael to be my substitute,” said I; “for go to that great town I must,” and I thought that if Ella had known upon what I was bound, she would not have wished me to tarry at home.

Just as I had reached the outer gates, I met the postman, who gave me a note; it was from Smith, and very laconic —

“It has just occurred to me over my mutton chop, that if you were to make proper enquiries, you might discover the particular company of the particular battalion of artillery to which Serjeant Moore belonged; and by following up this enquiry you might ascertain how many children he had at the time of his death.

“Yours, at dinner,

“JOHN SMITH.”

“Thank you, John Smith!” I exclaimed, as I thrust his note into my great-coat pocket, “I’ll act up to your advice, if I can’t find Paul Phillips.”

I need scarcely tell the reader, that I was bound for Shoreditch, and at Shoreditch I had safely

arrived, about an hour and a half after leaving the Rectory. With a palpitating heart did I look about me for a pawnbroker's—there were several in the neighbourhood. Uncle-Benjaminship seemed to flourish apace in the respectable vicinity of Shoreditch.

First, I read the name of Abrahams, then of Johnson, then of Middleton, then of Levi—but no Jones. Perhaps Larry had mistaken Johnson for Jones; so I retraced my steps, and made inquiries, but no Paul Phillips lodged in the house; my heart began to sink with despair, for I had walked half-a-mile in either direction, but no broker named Jones was to be found.

So again I started from the Church, determining to thread all the collateral streets, as I had traversed the main thoroughfare. In the first that I scoured, there was no pawnbroker's; in the second, I beheld, at the further extremity thereof, three golden balls, glittering in the sun.

I quickened my pace as I approached them; “Money lent,” in enormous characters, stared me in the face, but I could not perceive the name of the charitable lender. A cloak, and two hats, and a pair of unmentionables pendant from the summit of the door-way, hid the nominative letters from my view.

But presently a most appropriate gust of wind

blew the cloak aside, and I read the name of *Jones*. I entered the house, fluttering with nervous excitement, and stood before the counter of the broker. I was half ashamed of myself, for there were several people in the shop, and it seemed that they were all staring at me. It was so strange that a well-dressed young gentleman should enter a pawnbroker's shop; and I did not at all like it to be supposed that I was raising a loan on my watch.

The pawnbroker thought that he had got a bargain; but I presently undeceived him, asking if one named Phillips lodged in the house.

"Yes, in the front-room, at the top of the house—walk up, Sir; you are sure to be right, if you go till you can go no further, and then look for a door with a crack in it."

"But is he at home?"

"Can't say, Sir—but you'll soon know by rapping at the door."

I did not much like the idea of walking up to the top of a strange house, in a barbarous part of the town, and of entering without any preliminary announcement, the chamber of a vagabond stager. But it was my wont, whenever my heart misgave me, to think of Ella Moore, and whenever I thought of her, I ceased any longer to be a coward.

And so it was, that when I stood before the

“ door with a crack in it,” I felt prodigiously brave ; and I said to myself, “ What does it matter if a legion of Paul Phillippes is in the room ? ”

I rapped, and I was desired to enter. I entered, and looked around me, but I saw no one in the room. There was a curtainless bed in one corner of the apartment, and thrown over it, was a great drugget. Scattered about the floor, were yards of thin printed papers, which looked like halfpenny ballads.

On a broken three-legged table was a fiddle, lacking its proper complement of strings, a basin, and the moiety of a water-jug. Two chairs, one of which was bottomless, a picture of Grimaldi, the clown, a large deal chest, a small heap of clothes, and a black greasy-looking wig completed the contents of the apartment.

But where was Mr. Phillips, himself? I looked around me, but I saw no one. I advanced into the centre of the room, but still not a creature was visible. A voice, and rather an *encomiastic* one, had certainly desired me to enter ; but whence had the voice proceeded? There was no other door to the apartment but that whereby I had entered ; no symptom even of a cupboard. I began to think that the voice I had heard was a sound awakened by the imagination, and that the chamber was, in reality, tenantless. What was

into the grave — but after all, what does it matter? Earth has little happiness for me, that I should sorrow to leave it, and in the grave the weary are at rest. And yet, Gerard, often as I have desired to lay myself down and die, at this moment I am anxious to live on, for I am not quite desolate in the world, and knowing that I have at all events one friend, who will shed a tear for me when I am gone, I cannot bear to think of parting from that one friend for ever. Just as I have

and something to live for, death, who has held back so long, and refused to come when I called upon him, steps forward and begins to menace me, crying out, ‘Thy hour is at hand!’”

“Oh! but you have a better friend than I am, and you will leave me to go unto Him.”

“What better friend, what other friend, Gerard?”

“He who has said, ‘Come unto me all ye who are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,’ — He who loveth a broken and a contrite heart. — He from whom Death cannot us dissever.”

True — Gerard, there is no disputing these things, and yet — and yet — faith is weak.”

“You have not doubted —”

“I hardly know — I have doubted in part, and believed in part — I have never doubted His existence, but I have been often tempted to murmur against Him, I have often refused to say when He has stricken me, ‘Thy will be done,’ and in the

stubbornness of my heart I have controverted the inscrutable ways of Providence, until I believed myself an injured man. I have had sore trials, and like the Patriarch Job, I have been tempted to ‘curse God and die.’”

“How much better, if you had exclaimed with David, ‘It is good for me that I have been afflicted.’”

“I know it; but to know what is right is not always to do it. Oh! I could have borne much—penury, disease, ignominy—anything but *what*. ‘I have endured. I know *why* it happened; at least I think so; but it is presumptuous to say that we can fathom the inscrutable motives of God. You know, Gerard, that we are told ‘to keep ourselves from idols.’ Now I had my idols, and I worshipped them—God punished me; He is a great iconoclast. He threw down my idols—he broke them into pieces, and he smote the worshipper, so that he went out from the temple a maimed and mutilated man. I could not kiss the rod, Gerard; I could not even try to do so—from that moment my heart was hardened—I gave myself up wholly to my despair. There was a sort of strange comfort in feeling that I was utterly without hope in the world. I refused to drink the waters of consolation from the only fount, whence I believe they ever spring. I closed my Bible, and I tried to persuade myself, that there was no God in the world; but *that* I

was unable to accomplish. Then I reasoned with God perversely. I questioned the justice of his decrees. I said to him, "Thou gavest me those children; didst thou give them to me, to love or to hate? To love, doubtless to love—then why hast thou smitten me for loving them? Thou gavest me strong affections—thou knowedst that I would doat upon my children—why then didst thou give them to me?—why then didst thou not send the curse—if thou must have cursed—of heaviness upon me? It would have been merciful—yes, God, it would have been merciful; but instead of this, thou hast tempted me—thou hast laid thy nets to ensnare me—and then thou hast punished me, for the evil unto which I was seduced by thyself. O brave justice! But Satan, thou sayest, was the tempter? Did Satan give me my children? Why then, Satan made the world, and to do evil is to serve our Maker—and good is evil, and evil is good. Oh! beautiful craft of the logician! Thus spake I, Gerard—horrible, most horrible was it not? and yet I never recalled my words, I have never bowed down my head meekly, and prayed to be forgiven for this hideous blasphemy. I have been hardened by long-suffering. I thought that affliction turned us towards God, but me it has turned from him. I once knew a man who was half an infidel. He lost a child, whilst I was dwelling in his house. When the

news was brought to him, for the boy died in a far country, the first thing he did was to send for a Bible. He had not read it save to controvert it for years; yet when he was afflicted, he hurried to it for consolation: it was the only friend that he had in his distresses. But I — I, Gerard, when God smote me, out of revenge as it were, I closed the pages of his Holy Book for ever.”

“No, not for ever; there is yet time. Thou mayest even now exclaim, ‘It is well.’”

“Ah! what was that?” cried Anstruther, standing as though some sudden recollection had just flashed upon his brain: “those three words, I ought to remember them. It was a case somewhat similar to mine.”

“Yes; the Shunamite woman made an idol of her child — God broke the idol to pieces, and yet the woman exclaimed, ‘It is well.’”

“And it was her only one —”

“Yes; her all — but still she said, ‘It is well,’ and God rewarded her for saying so.”

“He restored her child — ah! I remember it all — but I have no ‘Man of God’ to help me.”

“You have not yet said, ‘It is well.’”

“But if I were — this is fool’s talk — the sea cannot give up its dead. But, Gerard, it is meet that I should tell you the purpose for which I summoned you hither — I am dying —”

“Oh! no — no, not that — death is not written

in your face—you are young, and why should you die?"

"Because it is God's will. He does it to 'keep me from idols.' The face is often a volume of lies, trust not to it — if you could look into my heart you would see that it is almost wholly worn out. I have had very strange dreams of late, and since you left me I have felt the bitterness of solitude more than ever I have felt it before. I *am* dying — and, therefore, have I sent for you. You have an uncle, whose name is Pemberton."

"Do you know him?"

"Only by your report. Is he not 'a man of God?'"

"He is one of God's children, of a certainty."

"Think you that he is the man I need to assist me in making my peace with God? You know how I have sinned; and in this fearful crisis, death approaching me with giant strides, I feel that I want a spiritual adviser. Do you think that your uncle Pemberton would take up his abode beneath my roof?"

"I fear that it is impossible, dear Edwin. He is rector of a large parish, and I fear that he cannot abandon his flock for the sake of one solitary sheep. But doubtless he would come hither to see you for a few days if you think —"

"No, no—Gerard," interrupted my poor friend, "it was a wild fancy of mine, and now I see the

absurdity of the idea. I do not know your uncle Pemberton, and of my existence he cannot even be aware but — thinking the other day, over all you had told me concerning him, it occurred to me that he was the minister, from whose hands I should like best to receive the cup — the sacramental cup — which for many years my rebellious lips have not pressed. But this was an absurd chimæra, and we will not allude to the subject again. There is no lack of priests in the neighbourhood — I have one of my own, but I don't like him — not that I have ever heard him in the pulpit, but my steward tells me that he is harsh and unforgiving in his doctrines. I am beginning to think seriously upon the subject of religion; I much fear that I am in a perilous state."

Anstruther spoke in a calm voice — but it was plain that his calmness was artificial. He was struggling, all this time, against the tide of his natural emotions, and the colloquial style, in which he spoke, was evidently a stratagem resorted to for the purpose of keeping in subjection the feelings which were ready to gush forth in a torrent of impetuous eloquence. But Anstruther was no actor. None ever played the hypocrite with less success than my broken-hearted friend. He knew this himself, and more than ever did the consciousness of his utter inability come upon him at this moment. It was in vain to raise the mask to his

face. He knew this, so he dashed it to the ground.

“No — no — it will not do,” he continued, in a choking voice, whilst the veins of his temples were unnaturally distended, and the muscles of his face seemed convulsed ; “it will not do to impose upon you any more — I have a fire burning in my heart night and day — I shall be damned, Gerard — I shall be damned.”

I was appalled by the frantic energy of Anstruther's manner, and the strange words that issued from his lips. I thought that a sudden rush of insanity had overwhelmed his intellect, and that I stood in the presence of a madman. I knew not what to do, but to look into his face. I had not power to utter a word.

“Yes, Gerard, it is utterly in vain to attempt any longer to deceive myself — my soul is in a perilous condition. For years past I have been as it were in the slumber of intoxication, and now that I am awake and look around me, I see what a degraded creature I am. The fact is, that turning over a heap of books the other day, I chanced to alight upon a Bible. It fell open, and by accident — no, no — not that, for I plainly see the hand of God in it all — my eye fell upon a certain passage in Job, which, as nearly as I can remember, runs thus : ‘Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out; he is excellent in power and in judg-

ment, and in plenty of justice: *he will not afflict.*' Now when I read this I became very wroth; an unclean spirit began to tear me, I cast the Bible indignantly away, exclaiming, 'This is utterly false,' and then I threw myself full length upon a sofa in a paroxysm of turbulent emotion.

"When I became a little calmer," continued Anstruther, "I endeavoured to compose myself to sleep. It is my way, whenever I have been violently excited, to induce sleep as soon as possible, for it is the only means whereby my nerves are ever settled. I did sleep — but *such* a sleep, if I were to live for ever I should not forget the agony of that sleeping. I had a dream — but I cannot tell you what it was — the cold sweat is upon my brow, and my limbs tremble as I think of it;— 'twas more fearful than the vision which passed before the eyes of Eliphaz the Temanite.— I awoke, and the first thing that I beheld was the Bible, which I had dashed, in my anger, to the ground. That Bible had made a part of my dream—I fled towards the spot where it was lying, as an escaped malefactor flies to the sanctuary. I clutched the book, and I tried to read it, but for awhile I could not, because my brain was dizzy — but at length I read, and the reading made me calmer; I forgot my dream, but other fears came upon me, yet these fears were not unmingled with hope. When I laid down the book, the memory of my dream

rose up again to haunt me afresh, so I continued to read far into the night, and ere I closed my eyes in slumber, I *prayed*.

“Since that dreadful day, Gerard, I have had the Bible constantly in my hand. There are words of comfort in it, I know; but the more I read the more manifest does it appear, that if ever mortal creature exposed himself by his stubbornness to the just vengeance of the Almighty, I am that stony-hearted sinner. There can be no guilt greater than mine — it has been a life of guilt, not a casual act, — no; nor a multitude of acts. For years past I have been living in a state of rebellion against God, not merely neglecting, but warring with Him. A few tears of repentance, a few heart-issuing prayers, a few holy resolutions cannot wipe out this great sin. No, no — there is no hope for me, I shall be damned, Gerard, I shall be damned.”

The unhappy man here bowed his head, and hid his face between his hands, groaned aloud with excess of agony, as though his very heart-strings would burst. Remorse had rushed torrent-like upon his soul; and I almost feared that it would overwhelm his intellect.

For some minutes Anstruther moved not his hands from his face, but when he dropped them he gazed wildly around the room, and then said in a scarcely audible voice, “Where is Guido?”

“At Sir Reginald Euston’s.”

“Ah ! I forgot — some one else will do — I want wine.”

I hesitated ; for I feared to give him what he wanted ; but seeing my irresolution, he continued, “You need not be afraid, Gerard — for wine is my common medicine — just ring the bell ; for you will want some yourself — it will do us both no little good, I am certain.”

I did as Anstruther desired me to do — and presently the wine was brought.

“Now, Gerard,” resumed my unhappy companion, when he had poured down three or four large glasses of sherry, and compelled me to follow his example. “Now I will tell you for what purpose I have summoned you, which as yet you very imperfectly know. ‘I am getting weaker and weaker every day, and I fear that, if I postpone much longer setting about the task I have proposed to myself, I shall not have physical energy enough remaining to accomplish my purpose’ at all. You look wonderingly at me, as though you do not know what I mean. Well, then, I will explain myself, Gerard. You have often seen me in strange moods, for which you have been utterly unable in any rational manner to account. You may have had your conjectures, and it is possible that you may have collected from what has escaped my lips, that in early life I had the misfor-

tune to lose a young wife and three children. Doubtless this appears to you a calamity which no sensitive mind could ever suffer to pass into oblivion ; but still you will hardly suppose that this event, terrible as it was, after the lapse of so many years, could have the effect, when called back to my memory, of exciting me as you have seen me excited. Give me some wine, Gerard — you hear how calmly I speak, and how subdued are all the epithets I employ. But I was saying that you must often have suspected that there was some latent cause for these singular exhibitions of feeling — for instance, you must have thought that my grief would never have been so violent if it had not been mixed up with remorse — you must pretty well know, Gerard, that I have committed some fearful crime; in fact, that I had more to do, than is commonly supposed, with the death of my wife and children. Now I wish you to know the whole truth, and, therefore, have I summoned you, Gerard. You are the only being I love in the world, and the only being who has ever witnessed me in one of my paroxysms of remorse, and, therefore, will I tell you a history, which to none other has ever been revealed. I trust that I shall acquit myself decently — and yet it is a dread confession that I have to make. I well remember that the first time you ever saw me, you were pleased to say something about my

face — you said that it was the face of a good man, or something to that immediate effect—now, Gerard, I have told you once before this morning that the face of man is oft a volume of lies. I told you this, if I remember aright, on the day which saw the first of our covenant. Now look at me ? Do you see anything in my countenance to tell you that I have been a desperate evil-doer.”

“ Oh ! nothing — ”

“ And yet I am a *murderer* ! ”

“ A murderer ! ”

“ Yes ; listen to my story. ”

CHAPTER X.

THE SAD TALE OF THE MAN WHO PROUDLY CLUNG
TO HIS FIRST FAULT, AND WITHERED IN HIS
PRIDE.

My varied life
Drifts by me. I am young, old, happy, sad,
Hoping, desponding, acting, taking rest,
And all at once; that is, those past conditions
Flock back upon me.

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

“GIVE me some more wine — ”

“I must begin my narrative, Gerard, with sundry uninteresting family details, that I may enable you fully to comprehend what follows. I am the second son of my father, who was also a second son. My grandfather was a man of considerable property, both personal and real: the bulk of his estates, at his death, descended to his eldest son. My father was one of the partners in a celebrated

Metropolitan Banking-house. Somehow or other he contrived to be made a bankrupt.

“I was then about eleven years old. We had always lived somewhat extravagantly — a town house and a country house—horses, dinner-parties, and private tutors. My father lived up to his income; he had no thought for the morrow, and when ‘the House’ was declared insolvent he was pennyless.

“My uncle was extremely incensed — for he had lent his brother nearly forty thousand pounds only a few months before the affair of his bankruptcy; and he declared that my father was fully aware of the house being insolvent at the time. A dire quarrel ensued, and the brothers were separated for ever.

“My mother had a life-interest in some property, which was worth scarcely three hundred a year; and upon this slender income my parents went into Cornwall to live. We dwelt in a thatched house — a lamentable falling off from the splendid mansions we inhabited before. My mother bore her misfortunes very meekly; but my father was restless and disconsolate. It grieved him to live in a cottage.

“I was then, as I have said, eleven years of age — my brother was two years my senior. We were of very opposite dispositions — he was born to be liked by the many, I to be loved by the few.

To you, who have studied the human heart, methinks this description will be enough. You can easily fill up the blanks.

“My uncle, who had always been very kind to us, and with whom we had passed many happy days in the *Abbey*, compassionated the condition of my brother and myself. He had only one son; he was very rich; and he could well afford, therefore, to educate us.

“He did so—he sent us to a large private school, and we always spent our Christmas holidays at Charlton. I forgot to tell you that my uncle was a widower. His only child was educated at home under the watchful eye of a private tutor. He—my cousin, not the tutor—was a proud, domineering fellow, and I almost sacrificed the favour and affection of my uncle, by giving the young bashaw a sound thrashing for his insolence to me one day. My elder brother had more tact than I had, and he was considerably more in favour at Charlton.

“At school both my brother and myself stood rather high in the rolls of fame. • We were both of us very indolent, but there was a vast difference in our indolence. • His was positive, mine relative idleness. He would sit at his desk during study-hours, doing nothing, perhaps sleeping all the while,—I would be reading romances, writing poetry, or drawing fantastical devices; but, as

far as regarded the business of the school, we were both of us equally negligent. And yet, somehow or other, we knew our lessons full as well as our compeers. I seldom or never learnt mine, but I made a prodigious quantity of Latin and Greek verses, the fabrication of which supplied me with a knowledge of the languages, which enabled me at any time to translate our common school classics with facility. I do not know how it was, but I could always bring myself to learn any thing in the world, but the ordinary lessons of my class. I studied German and Italian, in my school hours, but if they had been our classics, I should have learnt Greek and Latin in their stead.

“ When my elder brother was about seventeen, my uncle procured him a civil appointment to India, and he was removed from school to the college at Haileybury, which was then only recently established. His removal did not affect me very much, for though we were excellent friends we were altogether in a different set, and we rarely consorted together. I well remember that his dearest friend was my especial enemy, but these things, anomalous as they may appear, are by no means of rare occurrence at school. His removal, I say, did not much affect me; but when I heard of his destination, I was strangely disquieted, and from that day forth I lived in a constant state of fear and trembling, for I expected to be victimized

in like manner myself, and in every letter that was brought to me, I expected to read my death-warrant. My brother was well contented with his lot, but I had an invincible dread of being sent to India, and a presentiment that the climate would kill me. From the hour that my brother was called away from school, my peace of mind, therefore, was gone. I became nervous, and low-spirited; my friends, who knew the cause of my grief, endeavoured to rally me in vain. Oh! many very bitter tears did I shed, when in the dark evenings I walked up and down the school-room, with my arm round the neck of my favorite associate, pouring forth my sorrows into his ear, and dwelling upon my numberless apprehensions. I lived rather more than a year in this state of tremulous suspense; and then the death warrant was signed."

"A writership for you, also—"

"Oh! no, Gerard, nothing half so good—a *cadetship*. 'But,' added my uncle, 'if you work hard at the Military Academy, with your abilities, you ought to procure a commission in the Engineers, which is looked upon as equivalent to a writership.' Now, as my mathematical acquirements extended no further than the Rule of Three, and as I had only a few weeks for the extending of my knowledge, previous to my entering the Academy, my prospect of gaining a commission in

the Engineers, which requires as much mathematical knowledge as it does to take a Wrangler's degree at Cambridge, appeared meagre in the extreme. Had it all depended upon classics, I should undoubtedly have been first Engineer; but I had no head for mathematics; my intellect was of the imaginative class; it was without method and squareness; I was certainly never meant for an Engineer.

“But this did not very much distress me,—for the misery of going to India seemed to admit of no degrees of comparison. There was neither better nor worse in the case. I was destined to end my days beneath the Tropics; that was enough, and it did not matter to me whether I went as a writer, an engineer, or a drummer boy.

“And so to the Military Academy I went. I must tell you, Gerard, that neither my father nor my mother favoured this scheme for the banishment of their children. To my mother, indeed, it was a sore affliction, and it well nigh broke her affectionate heart. But what could my parents do? They had no provision to make for their sons,—they were without money and without interest. They had nothing to do but to submit.

“And they did submit—so to the Academy I went. What did I there? I got rid of my morality in an incredibly short space of time. I was somewhat startled—somewhat shocked, at first,

by the debauchery of my fellow-students; but my squeamishness did not endure very long, and I soon became an accomplished profligate.

“To swear, to game, to sing filthy songs, to get drunk, to forge letters, to walk unblushingly into the shops of the pawnbrokers, and many more worse things than these, were looked upon as very gentlemanly accomplishments. I was considered rather a ‘slow man,’ than otherwise, and yet I confess that I did many things at the Academy, of which I shall be ashamed to the end of my days. Here was it that I left off, entirely, the old-fashioned habit of saying my prayers. Here was it that I learnt to drink raw spirits, and to swear that they are spoilt by dilution. Here was it that I first read Tom Paine, and thought Volney a better authority than the Bible.

“I sojourned in this lazar-house of iniquity, during a period of two years, at the end of which time, I received a commission in the Artillery, three or four prizes, and some handsome compliments on my good behaviour, from the chairman of the Court of Directors. • Mine was merely comparative goodness—I was only better than the very bad.

“Three months after this, I embarked for Calcutta, having been attached to the Presidency of Bengal. I was then eighteen years of age, tall, and of a manly aspect. I had been provided with

a liberal out-fit, and an ample letter of credit. I believe that I had every thing in the world, which a young man in my situation could desire, but the situation itself was so intolerable, that if a ship had been fitted out expressly for my accommodation, I should not have felt any less reluctance to embark. I wonder that the Company can get a Governor-general, much more a swarm of cadets. The only means of accounting for such a moral phenomenon, as is presented by this unfailing supply of little victims, is by the tender age of the victims themselves, who being sent out as a matter of accommodation to their elders, discover, when it is too late, that they are in the path of the Juggernaut—the Juggernaut of crushing disease.

“I well remember that the parting from my mother was a sad scene — a very sad scene indeed. My father came on board the ship with me; and I bore up very well until I beheld him, after leaving me, throw himself down, full length at the bottom of the boat, and heard him sob like a little child. Then I turned away from the vessel's side, and I hurried into my cabin below. I had no longer any need to struggle against my emotions, they were all gone, for whose sake I had pent up my tears, endeavouring to set an example of fortitude, which I did not feel — they were gone and I was alone in the world, a desolate companionless being. I

thought that I should have died with agony that night.

“I had a great number of books with me on board; they were mostly of my own selection, and consisted almost exclusively of poetry and metaphysics. I studied very closely during the whole voyage and acquired considerable knowledge, though it was not of a very useful nature, being almost entirely theoretical. My mind was by nature speculative and the abstruse speculations of the metaphysician afforded me no little delight. There was a fellow-voyager of mine, I remember, a young man about two years older than myself, who had somewhat of a kindred intellect. We both of us fancied ourselves philosophers; he was the most logical, I the most ideal, of the two. When we differed upon any point, he had the advantage in argument; but when we agreed, I had far more to say, I outstripped him in eloquence; he could only reason, I could illustrate—he went straight forward, visiting only the towns on the high-road, I branching off in every direction, and scouring all the circumjacent country. He reduced all his discoveries to a sort of formula; I expounded my doctrines in a poem.

“Yet in spite of this difference, we assimilated wonderfully, and very pleasant indeed were our communings. We read Berkeley, Reid, Brown,

and Dugald Stewart together. It was whilst studying the *Alciphron* of the former writer that each of us discovered in the other, a leaning towards scepticism. We had hesitated to speak out before, but now our latent infidelity was suffered to manifest itself in its true colours. We were mutually delighted with the discovery we had made, and we became leagued together in infidelity.

“My friend was the most accomplished sceptic of the two, but I very soon contrived to keep pace with him. And then we jogged on merrily together in our crusade against religion. It was my friend’s business to knock down, mine to build up. He was destructive, I creative. He, by the closeness of his reasoning, contrived to prove the fallibility of an old faith; I by the fertility of my imagination, to substitute a new one in its place. My associate did not trouble himself to examine the soundness of my fabrications; he was satisfied with the work of demolition. And this was fortunate, for they could not one of them have stood a logical test. But we were both of us well satisfied with what we had done. I cannot help thinking now that I was better off than my companion—I had a faith, though a false one, to which I clung—he had nothing whatever to support him.

“When we landed at Calcutta, I lost sight of

my friend. He was sent to the Upper Provinces, I to the head-quarters of the artillery. I found one or two of my brother officers, who encouraged notions similar to mine ; but as we did not very often meet together, except at the mess-table, we had not many infidel discussions.

“ I could not explain to you, if I were to try, what my religious views were at that time. I do not think that I very well knew. I certainly was not an atheist, and I did not altogether reject the doctrine of the atonement—however it would be utterly useless to discuss these matters now. I read immensely when in India ; and wrote largely for certain literary periodicals. I was temperate in all things, but in study, and was only a *helluo—librorum*.

“ But this intellectual intemperance was perhaps more prejudicial to my health, than any bodily excesses could have been. So it happened that I had scarcely been a year in the country, when I was attacked by a virulent fever, which was succeeded by another, and another ; and at last I was obliged to return home.

“ I sold all my books before embarking, and spent the voyage home in utter idleness. Like Voltaire's trees, I had nothing to do but to grow, and I did grow strong and robust. I scarcely ever read, unless it was an occasional novel, and wrote nothing the whole way home, but one or two

letters to India. However I projected two or three works, and laid in a fair stock of ideas.

“The company is rather liberal to its sick servants, and we had a comfortable military fund ; so that I received almost as much pay at home, as I did in India. My constitution had received a considerable shock, but I was never actually a sufferer, after we had left the Cape of Good Hope ; so that when I arrived in England, I made a determination of enjoying my three years furlough to the full. You must think all this, my dear Gerard, excessively common-place and prosaic. Man’s life is almost always prosaic until he begins to *love*. ”

“We shall come to that point presently. I passed some portion of my time with my father, and my mother in Cornwall — some with my uncle at Charkton Abbey — and the rest travelling about the country, visiting different friends and relations, or else lodging in the metropolis.

“During this time, I wrote two novels, which were only moderately successful. There was too much *ballast* in them ; — over-loaded with speculative disquisitions, though for the most part these disquisitions were clothed in eloquent language, and interwoven with the interest of the story ; my writings were too heavy and didactic for the excitement-loving taste of the times. Yet they

were flatteringly noticed by the critics, and I had no occasion to be ashamed of my performances.

“For the first year and a half that I remained at home, I endeavoured to live entirely in the present. I shut out the future wholly from my view; and I never thought about my return to India. When any body mention'd the subject to me, my brow lowered, and my answers were abrupt. I hated to hear any allusion made to the odious place in my presence. I tried to believe that I was never going there again; but I took no steps to bring about the accomplishment of what I so fondly desired. I was at this time two-and-twenty years of age, and being certainly possessed of considerable talents, had I exerted myself, it is probable that I might have found some means of earning a livelihood in England. But I was inordinately proud, and I would ask no one to assist me. I was at least independent in India — my appointment there was a provision either for life, or for death, and I felt that it would be impossible to settle in England, without demeaning myself, as I thought, by applying for assistance, from some quarter or other. And thus it was that I had been nearly two years at home, and I had done nothing to avert the fate, which I dreaded — my time had nearly expired, and yet I was to the full as resourceless as I was on the first day of my arrival.

“And now that the time for my departure drew near I began to accuse myself, for my bye-gone inactivity, and my heart died within me, when I reflected, that repentance had come too late, and now that there was no hope for me, and nothing to do but to suffer. How much might I have done in these two years, and yet I had done nothing. The books which I had written had failed to procure me a name in the literary world; and this failure resulted from my pride. I had rather delighted in the idea of running counter to the prejudices of the times; and I encouraged a proud consciousness of having resorted to no adventitious aid to further the success of my works. I wrote my books, and then left them to their fate. Their fate, as you may easily guess, was to be little read and rapidly forgotten.

“Another evil, in a worldly view, resulting from my pride, was that it did not suffer me to extend the sphere of my acquaintance. I would not enter into any society, where I did not *know* that my presence was desiderated. I accepted none but very pressing invitations, and I never courted an introduction in *my* life. I avoided, as I would a leper, a man holding authority, and to know that a person had it in his power to do me a benefit, was a signal for me immediately to shun him. The consequence of these morbid peculiarities, was that the number of my *friends* was very

small. I use the word in its extended sense as the world uses it, for I had two or three dearly loved friends, who would have laid down their lives to serve me, and in this I was more fortunate than my fellows. Perhaps, few have had more love showered upon them, than I have ; but it has not come from many sources. The love which I have attracted towards me has ever been concentrated and absorbing. This is the only love that I covet ; I want not a corner in a heart.

“ As I have arrived now at an important point of my history, I will endeavour with the utmost fidelity, to lay bare my soul, as then it was, to your inspection. I have anatomized the one passion of pride — there was another principle within me equally strong — it was *love*.

“ At school and subsequently at the Military Academy, I had been remarkable for the strength of my attachments. I was never without ‘the luxury of my one friend,’ but I was frequently compelled by circumstances to vary the object of my affections. A boy was taken from school, or his time had expired at the academy, and thereby I was deprived of my friend.* There was then a void in my heart, which it was necessary to my existence to fill up, so I would look about me for a new object to doat upon, and I was never unsuccessful in my search. At this period of my life, my affection was more intense than it was

enduring, and I confess that I rather delighted in change. More than once I have felt my love for a particular object gradually becoming less and less, from no exciting cause — no accountable reason, and the more I have struggled against my erratic propensities, the more rapidly has my affection diminished. It must be remembered that then I was a child — in after-years my passions were as enduring as they were intense.

“I had often formed very powerful attachments to persons of my own sex; but I had never been a great admirer of women. Perhaps, it was that I had never been thrown in the way of any very favourable specimens of the other sex; perhaps, it was — but be the cause what it may, I had formed an exceedingly low estimate of the female character, and I had always decided in favour of celibacy. I took no great pleasure in ladies' society — I never danced if I could possibly avoid it — I eschewed routes and concert-rooms, and made a point of never writing for an album.

“I cordially hated whatever was artificial, and this it was that made me shun society, and despise with such a hearty good-will, the common herd of ball-room misses. I could not bear to see nature shut out of doors, and convention domesticated in its stead. I was a remarkably keen observer, and I could detect insincerity in a moment. I was never to be deluded by a strata-

gem — I was not to be played upon by the most practised performer. A man of the world is rather a loathsome object ; but a woman of the world is thoroughly revolting. So you see, Gerard, that at this time of my life I was — but give me some more wine — I almost forget what I was saying, and I feel rather exhausted —”

“ You had better not go on — ”

“ Oh ! yes ; I have begun, and so I will finish my story. This wine is a marvellous restorer. Well, Gerard—up to a certain time all the women I had ever seen had sickened me, either with their affectation, their insincerity, or their emptiness. I had never yet seen woman as she ought to be, until I met —

“ But before I come to this, I must tell you that being, like yourself, of an exceedingly poetical temperament, I had fixed in my own mind an ideal standard of female excellence, and whilst I yearned, at the same time I feared, to meet upon earth a creature, who would realize my fancy-wrought dreams. I knew well enough, that if such a being were to cross my path, I should love so intensely, that I must either possess her or die. I knew that my affection for such a creature would become an all-absorbing principle in my breast, and that I should love to my own undoing. I knew ;—but these vain repetitions lengthen out my story to no purpose ; I wish to concentrate, not to

expand, and to be simple, not extravagant in my language. If I begin to *rave* lay your hand upon my arm, dear Gerard.

“I had lived more than two-and-twenty years in the world, before I knew what it was to love. I had once been rather disquieted by certain feelings of affection for a beautiful young married woman, from whose society I derived very considerable pleasure, but as it was unholy to cherish these feelings, I struggled against my passion, and at length ran away from the fair creature who had excited it. Absence cured me in less than a week — so it is certain that I could never have loved her.

“I said, Gerard, that I would lay bare my soul to your view ; this has been but a partial revealing. My story, however, as it proceeds will furnish many additional glimpses of the springs whereby the strange machine has been moved. I think that if I excel in any thing, it is in the anatomy of the human heart — on paper at least, for speaking rapidly as I do now, I exhibit only the most prominent features of my idiosyncrasy. The more refined workings of my soul — the under-current of motive — the more delicate springs of action, are lost sight of, and you see me but in part. Methinks, that if I were to write my autobiography — a psychological autobiography, for mine has been a life of passion.

not of action, it would be an interesting study for the metaphysician. Perhaps, there never was a more extraordinary intermixture of good and evil in the heart of any one man than of mine. — But listen, Gerard; up to this point you have seen me not in a most amiable light. I have exhibited myself thus far, as proud and discontented, sceptical, and unsocial. I was all this — but I had certain redeeming qualities, and they who knew me best loved me most. But I will not dilate upon my virtues — let it suffice that I was not wholly a brute. Think of me as being at that time a creature, whom it would not be very difficult to love in spite of my manifold infirmities, and especially bear in mind that I was endowed with a powerful and penetrating intellect — that I knew well enough how to lead the heart captive, though I had seldom or never put forth my strength — that I could read the heart as I could a book, and, therefore, that I knew, when I desired to please, how to modify my powers of pleasing; and lastly, remember, that I was gifted by nature with a tolerable person, an ever-ready flow of words; a retentive memory, and a lively imagination; — add to these good gifts—and believe me, Gerard, that this last is the crown of them all, for there is nothing which more unchaineth the heart,—I was a creature of the most exquisite sensibility.

“ You see now, though imperfectly I confess, the being that I was, when, in my twenty-third year, I went down to a small watering-place on the coast of Sussex, to spend a few weeks with some distant relations. There was a young lady, staying in the house, who was in some way connected by marriage with my relations ; she was only on a visit there, as I was — I never shall forget that visit.”

“ You loved — ”

“ Yes, Gerard ; in this young lady I beheld the realization of all my dreams — the consummation of all my yearnings — the incarnate likeness of the spiritual being, whom I had so long been worshipping in imagination. Visibly before my eyes beheld I *a perfect woman*. I was lost. It was even as I feared it would be. A devouring passion took possession of my soul — ”

“ And the young lady ? ”

“ She loved me in turn — ”

“ But her name ? ”

“ MARY PENRUDDOCK — ”

“ Then it is even, as I suspected, and Ella — ”

“ *What* is as you suspected ? ”

I was silent — I knew not how to answer ; but at length I faltered out, “ I will tell you anon.”

Anstruther seemed satisfied ; he looked at me for a moment — a faint smile of affection lighted

up his wan face. Then he opened his lips, and said, "Gerard, my throat is very dry; give me some more wine."

Obeyed; and in a few moments, thus Anstruther continued his story.

CHAPTER XI.

THE INCARNATION OF THE IDEAL.

I never thought before my death to see
Youth's visions thus made perfect.

* * * *

She met me stranger upon life's rough way,
And lured me towards sweet death ; as night by day,
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift Hope,
Led into light life, peace.

SHELLEY.

" I must tell you something about Mary Penraddock. She was two years younger than myself, but she looked still younger than that. She was exceedingly beautiful, and moreover hers was precisely the style of beauty I admired. She had blue eyes, and luxuriant yellow hair, and the most beautiful complexion in the world. I will not weary you, Gerard, with an account of her personal charms. We all have our particular notions

of female beauty ; so think, Gerard, of Mary Penruddock, as you would have her be, not as I describe her, because, should it happen that your taste does not sympathize with mine, you will perhaps marvel that I should admire a being, who so little accords with your ideas of perfection. But I forgot—you do coincide with me—I remember now perfectly well.

“I did not think as many do, that personal beauty is essential to love. I could admire beauty, but I think that I could have loved a creature in no wise endowed with it. Do not think therefore that I was captivated by the outward loveliness of Mary Penruddock. I had seen eyes as bright, features as delicate before ; but I had never been moved to love by these visible attractions. No ; no, Gerard, I should have loved her as well, had she been infinitely less beautiful than she was.

Her father was an independent gentleman, residing in the vicinity of London, a justice of the peace, and so forth—a most worthy and benevolent man, who spent his whole time in doing good, both in precept and in practice a Christian. She was his eldest daughter, and she had been almost entirely educated by her mother—a lady of singular piety and varied accomplishments— one indeed ‘not of the world.’

“And Mary was not educated *for* the world. If she had been, I never should have loved her.

Though they dwelt in a populous neighbourhood her parents saw little society, and were in nowise the slaves of convention. They took no pains, in the bringing up of their children, to render them as artificial as possible—they did not teach the little creatures to talk like parrots, to move like puppets, and to wear a mask all the day long. It was not one of their doctrines that nature is a clown, and truth a barbarian. They did not altogether believe that hypocrisy is the *το πρεπον* of education, that it is better to seem than to be, and that worldly opinion is more to be listened to than the conscience. They did not teach their little girls, almost from their cradle, to look forward to the day of their ‘coming out’ as the haven, to which all their thoughts are to tend, and for which all their actions are to be a preparation. They did not train up their children to prefer an opera box to a church pew—a play-book to a bible—a singer to a priest—but they brought up their daughters to be women and Christians.

“And Mary Penruddock was well nigh perfect. I could scarcely wish her other than she was. Though herself a devout Christian, she was full of humility and toleration; utterly without *cant*; she never exalted herself, nor indulged in any self-congratulations. Genius she had, and varied acquirements, but she shrunk from displaying what she possessed. Though she had read much, and

was herself a poetess, the most spiteful could not have called her a blue. She was full of sentiment, and yet she was not sentimental. I speak thus paradoxically; for I doubt not but that you will discern what I mean.

“She had seen very little of the world, and was quite uncontaminated by its evil influences. She was all nature and freshness, the most artless creature in the universe. She had never been taught to restrain the genuine impulses of an honest heart; she had never learned to school her emotions, nor knew she at all how to act the part of a player. I loved her for her ingenuousness, her candour, her simplicity. I could read her heart in her face; I could confide in what issued from her mouth. I knew that her words were not studied, and that she had not taught her features to lie. Never was there a more beautiful mixture of childlike ignorance, and senile wisdom, than I beheld in Mary Penruddock—ignorance of the world and its ways, knowledge of the heart and of its workings. At one moment she would set me a-smiling, by some innocent question, at the next she would set me a-thinking, by some profound remark. She had never been within the walls of a theatre, nor entered the doors of a ball-room. She had not even learned to dance, and yet she was full of grace. I well remember once that she asked me, what people did when they *waltzed*.

“There was no sameness, nothing wearisome in Mary’s character. She was at one time all playfulness, at another, melancholy and thoughtful. She would laugh and say all manner of absurd things, so that you would think her the blithest spirit in the world; but in a minute the smile would pass away from her face, a cloud would gather upon the serene heaven of her brow, her eyes would be suffused with tears, and her lips be pressed together in silence. And thus she would sit perhaps for an hour, enveloped in a shroud of thought, ‘looking, in idle grief, on her white hands’ until the old mood would return upon her, and then she would rise up and laugh at herself, for being sad, and become as absurd as she was before, and frolicsome as a little fawn in the meadows — ‘What a strange compound you must think me,’ she would say, ‘at some moments, so foolish and trivial, and at others so sombre. I have often thought that there must seem a strange inconsistency in my character, and yet I think it is only because I have very sudden and almost unaccountable transitions from joy to sorrow, and from hope to fear. The one, however opposite, seems but the harbinger of the other, and I am always quite certain if I ever feel particularly happy, that this feeling is but a prelude to one of deeper distress.

Chords, which vibrate sweetest measures,
Thrill the deepest notes of woe.

“ I am inclined to think that the general tone of Mary’s mind was rather desponding than sanguine. Her philosophy was not of a cheerful order. Having gained little or no knowledge of mankind from observation and experience, her opinion of the world had been derived almost wholly from books; and it is too true, that both poets and novellists love to paint the darker side of poor human nature. And so it was that Mary looked upon mankind with an eye of distrust; she dreaded the hollowness and insincerity of the world; without being positively suspicious, she seemed loath to place confidence in men. She confessed that she had never been wronged by any one—but then she had lived out of the world. Perhaps she was not right, but the more she read, and the more she thought upon the subject, the greater appeared her cause for rejoicing that she had not been thrown into the world.

“ I endeavoured to combat Mary’s prejudices, not so much because I differed from her, as because I conceived myself as an individual to be included in this general censure; and I thought that whilst pleading the cause of the world, I should be vindicating my own claims to sincerity. Yet there was something in all this that pleased me, for the more we conversed about men, the more manifest became Mary’s hatred of artificial society, and conventional things. I only differed

from her when she said that there was no sincerity in the world ; when she said that there was *little*, I agreed with her. That there was something kindred in our tastes and feelings—something that drew us insensibly together—we knew from the first day of our meeting. Time rendered our sympathies more apparent. We loved the same books, the same qualities, the same places. We both of us had an equal aversion to whatever was *square*, (this was her own word,) common-place and rule-of-threeish. We were both of us poets, and creatures of impulse. She was musical, and I painted—she sang to me, and I paid her with my pictures.

“ There is a passage in one of our sweetest modern poets, which beautifully telleth the history of the love which we conceived for one another. Have you ever read Keats’ *Isabella*? If you have, you must needs remember these lines—

Fair Isabel !—poor simple Isabel !
 Lorenzo, a young palmer in love’s eye !
 They could not in the self-same mansion dwell,
 Without some stir of heart, some malady ;
 They could not sit at meals but feel how well
 It pleased each to be the other by ;
 They could not sure beneath the same roof sleep,
 But to each other dream and nightly weep.

With every morn their love grew tenderer ;
 With every eve —————

But I forget what follows; you shall read the poem yourself, by-and-bye, and I will proceed with my history.

“The lady in whose house we were dwelling had a large family of young children, and, being a most exemplary mother, she was of course constantly in the nursery. Her husband, too, though not engaged in business, had sundry avocations which called him abroad, so that Mary and I spent the greater part of each day in the uninterrupted society of one another—no one to watch our motions, no one to listen to our words.

“Pleasantly, very pleasantly, did our mornings pass, in sweet communion with one another. She would sit upon the sofa working, and I would sit beside her, sometimes conversing upon some favourite topic, in language gushing from the heart, or sometimes reading aloud one of our favorite poets, in a voice at once passionate and subdued. Then only was it that the language of love escaped my lips; but the words, which I uttered, were the words of the poet, not my own. I spoke not in my own person, but I poured forth my own feelings.—I said what I longed to say, what I would have said, had I not felt myself miserably tongue-tied.

“Poor Mary! she scarcely knew what to make

of my poetical wooings. The passages I selected were of all of a similar tendency, and there was a strange significance in my voice, and in my manner as I read them. Was it by accident, that I stumbled on these passages, and was the strangeness of my manner only the result of an imagination excited by fine poetry? or, was it all design? Mary asked herself in vain. It was *not* design, Gerard—when I took up a volume of poetry, I knew not what passages I should read—but, I could not help reading those poems which best harmonized with the tone of my feelings at the time, and it is not strange that my manner should have been most earnest when I read of that which I most felt. I practised no art in my wooing.

“ But this was not all, Gerard. We frequently walked out together, unwatched by the eye of a duenna. Then had we nothing to do but to commune with one another, and very sweet, indeed, were our communings. We spake to one another unreservedly. We revealed our inmost souls to one another. All our long pent-up feelings now gushed forth in a stream of words. Each was to each like the prophet’s rod, which smote the rock and drew forth water. We could comprehend, fully comprehend the secretest workings of one another’s souls. Emotions, which we had long

conceived to be unintelligible to any but ourselves, were now described by the one and immediately understood by the other. There was a bond of sympathy between us. We felt, as we conversed, that we need conceal nothing—not even our most morbid sensibilities. We feared not to behold, on the other's face, a smile of sarcasm, or a look of cold indifference. Heart communed with heart; and we mutually said, ‘I have never revealed myself to any as to you?’

“We had both suffered very much from the imperfect sympathies of all around us. How delicious, therefore, was it to meet with a kindred spirit, before whom we could pour ourselves freely when our beings overflowed with emotion. Now did we embody, in words, all our most delicate sensations — feelings which we thought would have been for ever unexpressed, now found their way into language. All our hopes, our fears, our desires, our joys, and our sorrows, were revealed to the other—and what delight in the revealing!

“We were by nature similar. In Mary Penruddock I beheld a feminine incarnation of myself. Do not mistake me, Gerard; she was as far above me in the scale of morality, as the sun is above the moon, and yet elementally we were alike. The fruits were different, but the trees were the same. She had grown in a different soil—she

had been nurtured by other hands — she had been watched more carefully, and tended more assiduously ; she had not been exposed to the winds of circumstance and the blights of temptation as *I* had — she was pure, and *I* was corrupt — she like a river at its source unsullied and untainted, *I* like the same river when it has passed through many cities, and collected impurity from them all.

“There were some beautiful little sequestered churchyards in the neighbourhood of * * *, and to these spots we delighted to resort. There would we spend hour after hour among the tombs, conning the barbarous poetical attempts of the rustic epitaph-makers. Gerard, when *I* began to love, *I* ceased any longer to be a sceptic.

“*I* know not how it was. Love is a kind of religion ; and, insensibly it led me to my God. It was no convincing of the reason — no logical process whatever, that accomplished this great change. Religion slid into my heart ; it did not enter into my head. *I* felt, *I* did not think, that there was a God, a Saviour, and a Heaven ; *I* began to pray ;” one night after retiring to my chamber, *I* found myself prostrate before God. *I* had not knelt for many a year,— not since *I* left school ; but now *I* was praying and weeping. *I* was praying for Mary Penruddock, and weeping to think of my unworthiness. *I* began to pray for her ; after a while *I* prayed God to make me

worthy of her. On the following morning I spoke to her on the subject of religion; she had never intruded these matters upon me, and I had never broached them before. I asked her about the sacrament; whether she had ever received it; she looked at me wonderingly, and said, that 'she had never missed receiving it since she was confirmed.' I stood abashed in her presence; for I had never received it in my life.

"I acknowledged my transgressions, and promised sincerely to amend. Mary gave me some spiritual advice, and I resolved for her sake to be converted. Mark this, Gerard, I determined to love the Creator, that I might be more acceptable in the eyes of the creature. Yet it was better than not loving Him at all.

"From that time forth I prayed nightly, and always in an agony of tears. I do not know that I wept over my transgressions so much as I wept over my miseries. The fact is, that every day was to me like a long dream of bliss, from which I was doomed to wake upon retiring to my chamber at night, and the re-action which ensued was terrible. I often cried myself 'well nigh into convulsions to think of, my great love for Mary Penruddock, and my little hope that she could ever be mine. When in her sweet society, I enjoyed the delight of the present, and did not suffer myself to be vexed by the apprehensions of the

future ; but when alone — oh ! Gerard, you cannot conceive the agony of my solitary musings.

“ We had dwelt beneath the same roof nearly a fortnight, when Mary came to me one morning, and announced her intention of returning home on the morrow. She had been unwell for the last few days, and she thought it better to go home — she had told Mrs. —, and had written to her mother — she was sorry to depart so suddenly, but on the whole she thought it was best.

“ A crushing weight fell upon my heart as Mary uttered these words ; I felt very sick, and could only falter out, ‘ I will go home with you.’

“ ‘ Oh ! no — you had better not,’ said Mary, my parents will not like it, I am sure.’

“ ‘ But how can I stay after you are gone?’ said I ; ‘ I shall not have the heart to abide here.’

“ Mary seemed very sorrowful ; she would have liked my escort, but her parents would think it strange, and it would seem so odd to leave * * * so suddenly without any better reason than this, and altogether she thought it would be better for me to wait a day or two, and so I consented to stay.

“ Oh ! Gerard, I never shall forget the exceeding wretchedness of that evening ; I was so miserable that I talked incessantly, and told comical stories for the sole purpose of keeping myself from crying. If I had paused for a moment, I

should have burst into an agony of tears. Mary was too keen an observer not to know that my mirth was artificial—she did not think me so heartless a being as I must have appeared to the rest of our party.

“So Mary went. When the carriage drove off I whistled, hummed a fragment of a tune, and then turning round to my host, I told him that I was going for a ride.

“I walked leisurely down to the livery-stables, selected the best horse I could find,—mounted, and having ridden slowly through the town, I struck out for the South Downs. I had no sooner got upon the turf than I clapped the spurs to the sides of the horse, and urged the animal into a full gallop. I was trying to ride away from myself—to work off my misery by excitement. Quiescence would have killed me outright. Any thing was more desirable than that—any thing more easy to be borne than that dull torpid state of suffering—that dreary stagnation of the heart, which comes upon us when any great joy has departed—any period of sweet excitement is at an end. If I could have rushed into the thick of a battle I should have been happy; it was necessary that I should move, and the more rapid the motion—the more stirring the turmoil, the better. But my horse was too slow for me; an Eclipse could not have kept pace with my desires, and I

had but a sorry hack. Whip and spur were utterly useless. The poor beast was jaded; he laboured on heavily; he was not the animal for *me*.

“So when I had ridden about fifteen miles I struck down again towards the coast, and made, in a straight direction, for Brighton. There I put up my weary beast, procured a fresh horse in its stead; drank off a pint of sherry, and galloped off, at full speed, towards Lewes.

“I was this time gallantly mounted. The horse they had given me was young and impetuous. He needed neither the spur nor the whip; he would fain have run away with me, but he could not, and yet I gave him the rein. What horse could have run away with me then?—what fleetness could have outstripped my desires? Onward we went gloriously, miles and miles of clear down before us. Nothing to stay our progress, no one to watch me as I went—oh! Gerard, the delirium of that ride!

“The air was fresh, for it was early spring, and we were on the summit of a chain of hills. I uncovered my head, and shouted with the wild energy of a bedlamite. I was in a whirlpool of rapturous excitement. I uttered strange ejaculations, and flourished my whip aloft like a battle-axe. The tears streamed in torrents down my face, but I knew not the source whence they came.

I was intensely miserable, and yet I was intensely happy. I was mad — positively mad — there was no coercive power in my mind. I believe that if I had come to the brink of a precipice I should not have reined in my steed.

“ At length I felt that I was choaking—I could not give free vent to my tears, and the strong tide of emotion was strangling me. Scarcely knowing what I did, I pulled up my horse with a jerk which nearly threw him back upon his haunches. I dismounted, and walking by the side of my beast, whom fear had made passive as a lamb, I wept long and uncontrolledly until I had expended all my tears ; and then I again leapt into the saddle — again I applied the spur and flourished the whip — again I flew along the downs, shouting. Before me I beheld a long line of posts, and some strange little buildings, like pigeon-houses. I was approaching a race-course ; this gladdened me, for I knew that the riding would be good. On I went ; there was a chain across the entrance to the course ; I rode at it, my animal cleared it — another, he cleared that too — a third, and both the horse and the rider were dashed with headlong violence to the earth.

“ I scarcely know the precise nature of our evolutions. The hind legs of my horse had been entangled in the chains, and his head had come in violent contact with the earth ; I could see this

plainly enough ; for when I rose up, which I did almost instantly, the poor animal stood beside me, trembling all over like an aspen leaf, and a large lump of turf was clinging to his forehead and his fore-lock. As for myself, I was too much excited to feel hurt; I had fallen flat upon my face, and I imagine that the horse had rolled over me ; but the turf was soft, and my bones were young — had I fallen on the hard road I must have been killed. None but a madman, Gerard, would have ridden a hired hack at these chains.

“But I *was* mad—and in less than a minute I was again upon the horse’s back, and riding furiously towards Brighton. I remember having pulled up by the side of a pond to wash my face, which was covered with mud, and to brush some of the dirt off my garments. When I entered Brighton, it was about four o’clock, and the fashionables were taking their exercise. I mingled in the gay throng of carriages, and equestrians ; and cantered backwards and forwards on the mall, with the air of a spruce cavalier, thinking that all the people were looking at me. But I was soon tired of this sober occupation, so I returned to the livery stables, reclaimed the horse I had left there, and then galloped back to * * * .

“I had ridden between fifty and sixty miles, but I was not in the smallest degree weary. However, I was prodigiously hungry” (for I had tasted no

food all that day) and I remember that I dined off beef-stakes. After dinner I took a warm bath, and next morning I felt not the slightest inconvenience either from my ride, or my fall. One of my eyes was considerably blackened, but it gave me no pain, so it mattered not — I was too wretched, to be annoyed by such trifles. There is one advantage in a great sorrow—it swallows up all the lesser ones.

“The following day was the Sabbath. I was intensely miserable. I went to church, but I could not pray — I could do nothing but poetize. There was a sort of melancholy pleasure in working my sorrows into verse. I made stanza after stanza, expressive of my utter desolation. I compared myself, one after another, to all the most forlorn things in the universe—

A sea without a shore,
A world without a sun,
A weary pilgrim fainting,
Ere his pilgrimage is done :

A lone tree, lightning-riven,
Upon a barren plain ;
A helmless bark storm-driven
Across a shoreless main ;

A chalice, without wine,
A fount that is dried up,
A palsied hand, too feeble
To raise the water-cup ;

A harp, whose strings are broken,
 A bird without its mate,
 A famine-wasted captive,
 Lorn and disconsolate ;

A poor old childless beggar,
 'Reft of his " one ewe lamb —"
 Oh ! none of these were ever
 So lonely as I am —

" And in this manner, Gerard, did I pour forth my miseries—I could do nothing else all that day. How bare and desolate seemed the house without Mary Penruddock !

" You may think all this very exaggerated, and ask me why I was so wretched. I will tell you, Gerard. I never expected to see Mary Penruddock again. She had gone home to her parents, and I had never visited at their house. They saw little society, and it was not probable that they would receive me — me, a young soldier, a young man of the world. Perhaps you will ask again why I should not have presented myself, as Mary's avowed suitor. Why ; I was penniless, I had no dependence of any kind, but my poor appointment in India, which was scarcely worth two hundred a-year, with little prospect of an increase, for four or five years at the least. How then was it possible that I could support a wife—and what right had I, situated as I was, to win the affections of any girl ? You will say perhaps, that because a

man is denied one blessing, it is no reason that he should be shut out from another,—because he does not enjoy riches, that he should not be suffered to enjoy love. Oh ! Gerard, it is a reason, at all events, it is *thought so*, and I began to reproach myself, for not having played the hypocrite, for not having thrown a cloak over the depth of my emotions, for not having worn an unsmiling face, and spoken in a cold measured voice—in short, for not having manifested an apathy, that it was utterly impossible to feel. Oh ! very many were the tears I shed, thinking of my sad destitution—oh ! very bitter and oft repeated were my exclamations, of ‘Edwin Anstruther, you are a beggar, and therefore what right have you to love?’ I knew not what to do ; and in the desolation of my heart, I prayed that I might be permitted to die. Never, Gerard, until I began to love did I feel the curse of poverty to the full.”

CHAPTER XII.

LOVE—THE ALEMBIC.

“ I know

That love makes all things equal ; I have heard
 By my own heart this joyous truth averred ;
 The spirit of the worm beneath the sod,
 In love and worship blends itself with God.

* * * * *

“ I love thee and I feel

That on the fountain of my heart a seal
 Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright
 For thee ———

SHELLEY.

“ You ask me whether Mary returned my affection. I did not know when she quitted * * *, neither very well knew she, herself. It was evident that she delighted in my society, and delighted to be with me alone,—that she was well pleased with my conversation, and that in order to please

me she would have put herself to considerable inconvenience; but whether her feelings towards me were those of friendship or of love, I could not very easily determine. We seemed, both of us, as by mutual consent, to have abstained from using the word *love* in all our dialogues. We spoke of *liking* one another, of *caring for* one another, of *feeling interested* in one another, but never of *LOVING* one another. Again, Mary never called me *Mr. Anstruther*, and yet she never called me *Edwin*; she could not use the former name, it was too distant and formal, yet she did not like to use the latter, lest it might be thought unmaiden-like, and presuming in her, after so very short an acquaintance. As for myself, after the first week, I called her Mary, and I could well see that she liked thus to be addressed.

“ Perhaps, I weary you with these little traits, and that I tell my story too much in detail; I will endeavour, therefore, to accelerate my pace; and tell you, at once, what I subsequently discovered. Until she left me, Mary did not well know the real state of her own affections. She had never paused to analyze her feelings; but had gone on from day to day as it were, in a dream of happiness. She thought that my manner towards her was strange; she had never seen aught resembling it before. She thought that many of my speeches implied much more than they ex-

pressed, but she feared that she might misconstrue, and therefore, she endeavoured to forget them. She was not quite sure that I was in earnest; I might be playing with her, she thought, and yet she could scarcely believe me to be a hypocrite. I had never declared my love, and therefore she could not be certain—why should she interpret signs, and looks, and expressions, which might probably mean nothing, into symbols of love? Perhaps, this was only the warmth of my manner, my common way with the women. She could not well be assured to the contrary—and how terrible it would be to discover that she had invested my words with meanings which they were never intended to convey, and that after all, instead of being in love, I was only sporting with her, *pour passer le temps*. And in this state of incertitude, did Mary think it wise to shut out reflection altogether.

“But this dreamy condition of things was not suffered to endure very long, for the gentleman, to whom we were on a visit, seeing that we were in a dangerous position, suggested, to Mary the advantage of an immediate return to her parents,—and this, not her illness, as I thought, was the cause of her sudden departure. Mary went—and then she discovered that I had crept into her poor little heart.

“She reached home, and she could not contain

herself; her heart was full, well nigh to suffocation; she burst into an agony of tears, and faltered out—*my name*.

“Then she was wretched. Should she ever see me again? Would I call, would I write, would she hear of me? Three or four days passed by, and she thought that I must be in London. At length came a packet containing a Magazine, with an article in it, bearing my signature; and there was a letter also, but merely a few lines, claiming an author’s privilege to present his works to his friends.

“But all this must be very wearisome, Gerard. Be it enough, that I called at her father’s house, and was admitted—that I repeated my visit—and received an invitation to dine—that very soon, I slept in the house, and was not suffered to depart next morning. I marvelled at the kindness of Mary’s parents, for I knew not that they were acquainted with her love.

“It was not very long before I discovered the true state of Mary’s affections. I felt happy, and yet I felt wretched, for I was miserably tongue-tied, and I knew not what to do. I was without money, and without prospects—how then could I make her my wife? But one day,—Oh! never will it be forgotten;—I was standing beside her with my arm around her neck, and my hand upon her shoulder, Gerard—we were looking at a piece

of fancy-work, which she had lately been employed upon; it was something that she was working for me—and there we stood, side by side, neither of us uttering a word. Our hearts were too full to speak. It was the silence of intense emotion. The tears gushed blindingly to my eyes. I raised my hand and laid it gently upon her head;—then slowly I drew back that beautiful head until it was pillowed upon my shoulder. I bent over her, and kissed her upon the forehead. ‘Oh! Mary, dear Mary,’ I exclaimed, ‘much better for us if we had never met—and never loved one another!’

“And there we stood, side by side—Mary’s head resting upon my shoulder, her eyes closed, and her beautiful face wearing an aspect of—— No, Gerard, no;—I see it before me now, I might paint it, but I cannot describe it. She was mine, mine for ever; it would have been vain to have asked her, for I knew it. I wanted no words to confirm my full assurance of her love. On the morrow, I spoke to Mr. Penruddock, and Mary was my betrothed wife.

“Nothing, in a worldly point of view, could have been less desirable than this union. I was the most ineligible of men—what the fashionables call a *detrimental*;—but, to Mary’s parents the one simple fact that we devoted upon one another was sufficient. Of a certainty our prospects were

meagre in the extreme, but it was better to live in hope than in despair. We could not control the wanderings of our affections; we could not forget one another if we tried. Love is the most intractable of all the passions; we knew this, and therefore struggled we not against it; so Mary and I were betrothed.

“We were both of us young, and perhaps, it would have been better, under any circumstance, to have postponed our union for a year or two. There was no necessity for an immediate consummation, and in the mean time, we determined to enjoy the present, and not to pry into the secrets of the future; I obtained an extension of leave, and for a period I was inordinately happy.

“What a very Aaron’s rod is this same passion of love! how all other thoughts are swallowed up by it! When love took possession of my soul it wrought an entire and radical change upon my morality. It was my salvation. Nothing could have been more lax than my way of life—nothing more unsettled and more unsatisfactory than my religious opinions, before I knew Mary Penraddock. I was not a sensualist, Gerard,—Oh! no, very far from that; my taste was too refined, and my delight in intellectual exercises too intense, to suffer me ever to wallow in the filthy slough of debauchery. In practice, I was infinitely more

moral than nine-tenths of my associates; but my morality was a matter of taste, not of religious obligation. I had no fixed rules whereby I regulated the conduct of my life. I followed the guidance of my own inclinations, neither referring my actions in any way to the will of God or the opinions of men. I was exclusively my own arbiter. Sometimes with the world, sometimes against it—sometimes with God, oftener without him, I lived a most lawless life of soul-debasing inconsistency. But when love entered into my heart I became a new man. All the grosser portion of my nature was separated from the more pure and cast-out, as by a great alembic. My heart was no longer the lazar-house of vile lusts, but the sanctuary of hallowed affections. I yearned after the good and the beautiful. It was the one desire of my soul to render myself worthy to be beloved, and to liken myself unto the object of my love. I had once been ambitious—ambition left me:—praise-seeking—now I cared not for praise. I had once delighted in piling up knowledge; even this seemed now a poor waste of time. All the tastes that I had most cherished, all the feelings which had most absorbed me, all the pursuits which had most engrossed me, were drowned in this great sea of love. It was an entire prostration, and sweeping away as it were, of my old moral edifice—pile

after pile was demolished, and a new structure raised upon their ruins—a chaste, simple, unvitiated structure—a structure of pure love.

“I am becoming wordy and obscure — let me now descend a little to facts. Once betrothed to Mary Penruddock, her father’s house was ever open to receive me. I cannot find any adequate terms to express the happiness of that period. In the family of the Penruddocks I beheld something which was utterly—but beautifully—at discord with all my pre-conceived notions of humanity. I had never met with any persons resembling them before, and had never thought there was so much goodness in the world. All so quiet, so meek, so subdued—none of the hurry, and bustle, and turmoil, and excitement, and struggling to keep up appearances that I had been wont to see in the houses of other men. Life seemed to flow on with them tranquilly as a gentle stream. I envied them, and I felt humbled, for I knew that I was an inferior being—a creature of a viler clay—so I tried to become one of them—I subdued all my errant propensities—I walked in the paths of these good people, and assorted myself to all their goings on. I found this easy, for love had prepared the way, through feeling, for the entrance on principle. I gave up frequenting the theatres and the race-courses, and left off breaking the Sabbath. I read my bible, and re-

ceived the sacrament, and was altogether a regenerated man.

“I loved Mary too well to desire that she should accompany me back to India, and be exposed to the evils of the dread climate from which I had suffered so much myself. And yet I knew not to what alternative I could resort. They who would have helped me were unable ; and they who could have helped were unwilling ; and without help nothing could be done. Poor Mary ! she was often troubled with vague presentiments of evil, and there were times when her heart misgave her that she should never see the consummation of her hopes. ‘I am sure,’ she would say, ‘it must be very wrong to love any fellow-creature so wholly and exclusively as I love you. And yet what is to be done ! You will be tired of my eternal presentiments, but I cannot help saying that I fear some thorn in the rose, which we are so engrossingly cherishing — or, perhaps, some sudden and destructive blight from Heaven will be sent to crop it altogether, and with it every hope of happiness and peace upon this side of the grave.’ And then she would tell me to ‘keep myself from idols ;’ but confess that she could not practise what she preached.”

“But at length in the very midst of our difficulties, wandering on in darkness as we were, a light shone upon us suddenly from the very quar-

ter whence we least expected it. I am now, as you know well enough, the proprietor of the Charlton estates; but at the period of which I am now speaking, Gerard, I could not have raised five pounds upon my chance of coming to the inheritance. There were four lives between me and the estates, and my cousin was of marriageable age. But so it happened, that this young man, who was upon the eve of quitting the university, was killed by the bursting of a fowling-piece, when engaged in a shooting expedition, with a large party of his friends. My father, therefore, was heir-at-law to the estates, and he very speedily inherited them. A brain-fever, induced by anguish of mind consequent upon the death of his son, carried off my uncle, a few weeks after my cousin, and I was no longer a beggar in the world.

“ I threw up my commission immediately — my father made me a handsome allowance, and six months after the death of my uncle, Mary Penruddock became my wife.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BREAKING OF THE IDOLS.

" 'Tis a story,
 Such as in pealing thunders might be told —
 Yet better lost in echoes o'er the sea,
 Since none can thoroughly know what's in the soul.
 Sorrow is strong,
 And I an unmarried and a childless man."

HORNE'S *Cosmo de Medici*

" I THINK that it would have been impossible for any two beings to have loved one another more entirely than did we. Mary often said that it was sinful — that our love was too much like idolatry, and that it ought to be subdued; yet she did not subdue it. Even now that our desires had been consummated, and that, to all appearance, we were basking in the full sun-light of security, poor Mary would still have her misgiv-

ings; and vague apprehensions of impending evil, when she was most happy and most buoyant, would rush suddenly upon her, and check the incipient laugh, or silence the half-uttered joke. Yet these moods of depression were very rare, and life to us was full of enjoyment.

“We went about from place to place, and having traversed England, we visited the Continent. Oh! Gerard, I was so purely happy throughout all this time — happy in the present, and full of hope in the future, for I was about very soon to be a *father*.

“I cannot describe to you the strange sensations of delight with which I anticipated this blissful event. How many plans did I form for the education of the unborn child — how many conjectures did I hazard as to the probable tenor of its life — how many absurd speculations were engendered in my mind as to the beauty, the genius, the virtues of the infant still in the womb. I felt assured that the child would be beautiful, gifted, and amiable like its mother, and I thought of my pride, my gratitude to God, my love for the babe, my increased love for the mother, and how beautiful Mary would look with the little suckling in her arms. The time approached — we returned to England, and took up our quarters in the Abbey.

“Gerard, another glass of wine. The hour

arrived, a man-child was born — I was a father — but the curse was upon us, and — Gerard — we suffered for our idolatry.”

“The mother died?”

“Oh! no — Gerard, not that — the mother lived, but the child, was a *monster*!

“A poor deformed, miserable object. They tried that I should not see it — they tried to conceal its infirmities with the clothes — but I took the babe into my hands, and I felt that it was a shapeless mass. My heart died within me, as though it had been crushed. I could not speak to the mother of the child.

“Gerard, now begin my confessions. Hitherto you have seen me as a man: I shall presently stand before you as a monster — more monstrous than my poor little babe. I seek to extenuate nothing — I was a brute, for I hated my child — from the hour of its birth I hated it — I could not look upon it without loathing, and my heart became full of evil thoughts. From that moment, another change passed over my spirit. I was no longer all love; I did not love Mary as I loved her before she had given birth to this *thing*, and yet still I loved her very dearly. It was only when she had the infant in her arms, that I looked upon her with altered feelings, and then — oh! it troubled me to see how Mary lavished her affection, and her

caresses upon this little lump of deformity just as though it had been a beautiful babe.

“ But much more did it trouble poor Mary to see my averted look, and extended arms, and to hear my indignant refusal to touch it, whenever it was brought into my presence. Oh ! very many bitter tears did she shed in secret, when she thought of the hatred that I bore to the child.

“ I had been married rather more than a year, when I found that my soul required some other aliment beside love. I was tired of utter indolence, and I longed for a more stirring life. I was wasting the prime of my manhood, and suffering my powers to decay. Was I, at the age of four-and-twenty, in the full vigour of my intellect, to subside into a state of dull inaction, and to be as one who had nothing more to do ? Was the sleepy stagnation of domestic life all-sufficient to satisfy the cravings of a soul like mine, conscious of its own great powers ? I had slept too long already ; and now I began to bestir myself. I panted after action and excitement. Home was no longer what home had been to me.

“ It happened that about this time, one of the representatives of a small borough-town, near Charlton Abbey, suddenly died ; and it struck me that this was an opportunity, which I should be a fool, were I idly to neglect. So I spoke to my

father ; he supplied me with resources ; and I was returned for the borough of M——.

“Then the long dormant cravings of ambition came back upon me, like the unclean spirit, with seven others more wicked than himself, and my last state was worse than my first. Gerard, I had the misfortune to succeed. My maiden-speech was a triumph ; I was an orator. My friends congratulated me, my party applauded me, the press noticed me, the public canvassed me — and finally, the ministry solicited me.

“But my wife — my Mary, grieved for me. She would sooner have seen me a quiet country clergyman, than the prime minister of a mighty nation. It was her ambition that I should be good and not great, that I should earn for myself an eternal, and not a temporal crown. She told me so — and I charged her with want of sympathy and said something or other about *cant*.

“And now I was thoroughly a worldling.

Society became my glittering bride,
And airy hopes my children.*

“I lived in a whirlpool of excitement. I was feverish, restless, and unsatisfied. I began to think that I had committed aⁿ act of egregious folly in marrying an unworldly wife. Had I been

* Wordsworth's *Excursion*.

single at this time, I might have advanced my fortune by some splendid alliance, for I was received in the houses of the great, and people of distinction courted me. And then, again, it was a constant source of mortification and annoyance to me, that Mary loved tranquillity and retirement; I could not drag her into society. It was evident that our interests clashed; we were ill-assorted, my thoughts were "of earth, earthly," but all her aspirations were heavenward. It offended me to hear her talk about country clergymen, for I regarded these good sort of people with very superior contempt.

"There was some change or other in the ministry, and I was offered an under-secretaryship in Ireland. I accepted it; and about this time, I became the father of another child — another boy, Gerard. Oh! so unlike its elder brother was this little babe — this infant cherub — it was the most beautiful creature in the universe. I was now indeed a father, — I felt, I loved, I acted like a father. I was ever-ready to fondle my child, ever willing to throw aside my books, and my papers, to play with the little angel, and be happy. I thanked God for this great mercy — I had never thanked Him for my first-born — but this was indeed a blessing — a child, not a *lusus naturæ* — a sweet little smiling cherub, not a monster of deformity, and I felt what it is to be a father.

“My hard heart was softened again. Love and ambition were the master passions of my soul,—now one, now the other was dominant. Ambition had held the supremacy for a year, but now love began to rule in its stead. I had never ceased wholly to love my wife, but as the mother of a monster, and as the opposer of my ambition, she had not been all in all to me, she had held but a corner of my heart. But now that she was the mother of a beautiful babe—oh! how empty, how worthless was worldly honour—how discordant seemed the voice of ambition. I loved as I had loved her as Mary Penruddock. I idolized both her and her babe.

“And now I was very happy—performing the duties of my particular office, with all due zeal and assiduity, yet at the same devoting many hours of the day to the calm delights of domestic enjoyment. And how happy was Mary to behold me once again, “using the world as not abusing it,” doing my duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call me, but not abandoning myself wholly to the allurements of vanity, nor living in a whirlpool of unholy excitement. And thus a year passed away. I served my party more by my writings than my oratory. I was contented, and I desired not to rise.

“And then another child was born unto me — girl, even more lovely than my beautiful boy — a girl with its mother’s face — and the cup of my happiness was full.

“Then began I to sin grievously, Gerard, I *idolized* these two children and their mother. I could not moderate my affection, I could not love them but with my whole soul. God is “a jealous God,” remember this, for I think that in your nature, Gerard, there is that which may lead you to idolatry. Be warned — for the hand of the Almighty is strong, and idols of clay are brittle.

“I was warned, but I hearkened not to the warning voice. My wife told me that I was sinning. She convinced me that it was unrighteous to love overmuch; but what could I do, Gerard? I ought to have loved God more, and to have loved my children less, but I could not. I tried; at least I flattered myself with the thought that I had tried, but my whole heart was not in my trials. I did not ‘ask in prayer believing,’ and therefore I did not ‘receive.’

“Moreover, I *sinned* in another way. Mine could not have been the pure, abstract love of my own offspring; for I loved not my first-born child. I doated upon my second boy and my little girl, more because they were lovely and pleasing to look upon, than because they were the children of

my loins. I ought to have loved my first-born more dearly than the others, because he most stood in need of my affection. But I could not—I could not love him—he was a very thorn in the side of my happiness—a very canker in the rose of my delight.

“But Mary loved the little deformity even more than she loved her beautiful children, and this in time began to disquiet me. I know that this is a common thing, Gerard; I know that a mother’s love is often showered more plenteously upon the stunted, than upon the flourishing plant; and of a certainty it is good that it should be so. But indeed, indeed I could not bear it—to my morbid vision it was profane—it was like a turning away from the beautiful idols of old Greece and Rome, to worship the grotesque, barbaric deformities of the graven images, which the Indian adores. I often reproached my wife for this heresy, and she would look upon me silently in reply. Gerard, even now I can call to mind the meek reproaches of the look, which she would turn upon me—a look which appealed at the same time that it upbraided, yet I was deaf both to the upbraiding and the appeal.

“And thus nearly four years passed away, and we were still residing in Dublin—I was occasionally summoned by my parliamentary duties—but what does all this signify—give me some more wine,

Gerard, and I will finish this painful history at once.

“A few more sentences will do it. I need not trace, through all its stages, the progress of the disease that has destroyed me. I need not tell you how day after day, month after month, the sickening disgust, with which I contemplated my poor deformed boy, grew stronger, until it worked me into madness. Had he not been my first-born, I might have tolerated it; but that he with his misshapen body, and his stunted distorted limbs, should stand between my beautiful Edwin, and the inheritance (for I must tell you that my elder brother died at Madras, whilst we were in Dublin,) was a never-failing source of turbulent emotion in my breast, and I could not cast out the demon that tormented me. The curse was upon me, Gerard—I had bowed down to idols, and it was the will of the Almighty, that the sin should work its own punishment and destroy me.

“In proportion as I doated upon my two younger children, did I loathe and abhor their elder brother. The one passion seemed to spring out of the other, and they kept pace in their subsequent development. But to her first-born did the mother still cling the more tenaciously, as I thought, for my hatred of him. And then another unclean spirit began to tear my diseased soul. I thought that Mary loved

the deformed child solely from a spirit of opposition—that she caressed him, and was kind to him to work my annoyance,—that she derived a malicious pleasure from praising the amiable qualities of the boy in my presence, and always endeavoured to conciliate my affections in his behalf at those very seasons when I was most exasperated against him. The effect of this monomania was that in time I became a brute, and treated my poor wife—my saint-like Mary—with barbarity.

“But still would she appeal to me in behalf of my first-born. Fully confiding in the justice of her cause, no unkindness could shake her resolution. She was the unshrinking advocate of the persecuted, and the helpless; I might frown upon her, but she was not to be shaken—oh! thou blessed martyr in a righteous cause, I look upon my hands and they are incarnadined.

“One day—one dreadful day—now, at length I have come to the crisis of my history. The merciless demon was at work in my bosom. I was in one of my most turbulent moods, when Mary entered my study with her favorite deformity—my study, where it had never been before, where I had peremptorily forbidden it to be brought. She came there, with a book in her hand, to shew me the marvellous progress that the

child had made in his studies. She came to taunt me, as I thought, with the moral worth and the intellectual beauty of the little monster, and to upbraid me for setting up matter above mind, for thinking more of the shell than of the kernel. She did say something about this, but there was exceeding mildness in the words that she employed, and exceeding gentleness in the tones, which uttered them. But they were enough to lash my spirit into a whirlpool of passionate excitement. Never before had the exacerbation of my feelings been so intense as they were at that moment. I scarcely knew what I did. I was insane. I uttered a terrific imprecation, dashed the book, that I had been reading, to the ground, struck the child with the palm of my hand on the face, so violently that he howled with anguish, and then thrust the mother and her deformed favourite, with frantic energy, out of my chamber.

“ I locked the door, and I picked up the book that I had been reading, but I found that I could not read. So I rang the bell, ordered a horse to be saddled, and was soon scouring the country, in one of those terrific fevers of excitement, which rapidity of motion alone can allay. When I returned, I sate myself down again to my desk, but the book which I had been reading was gone; and

in its place I found a small slip of paper, marked with the hand-writing of my wife.

“She had taken the book, Gerard—it was the last thing she had seen me touch, and she took it as a memorial—for she had fled. Yes, Gerard, the wife of my bosom had gone from me, taking with her our three children. She did not, she could not mean to desert me altogether: she had gone, as a warning, as a lesson to me; terrible the warning, and long-abiding the lesson—for on that night, Gerard, a storm arose—I saw it rising from my chamber window,—I saw the heavens blackening, and I heard the winds howling; then thought I of my wife and children, and trembled.

“I knew that the vessel in which she had sailed, for I had visited the quay, hoping that I might stay the progress of the fugitives, was but a small craft, and I trembled for its safety. It was, indeed, a dreadful night, and I trembled. The thunder roared, and I thought that it was the voice of God speaking to me, and bidding me to despair. I did not attempt to sleep. I did not lay my head upon the pillow. I sate by the open window, watching the storm, and ever and anon, in a voice of agony, beseeching God to pacify the elements. But he hearkened not, Gerard, he hearkened not, and the vessel perished in the storm—

my wife and my children were drowned in the great waters—*my idols were all broken.*”

“But the book,” I exclaimed in a choaking voice, for I was almost suffocated with emotion, “the name of the book, Edwin,—the book that she took with her?”

“ERASMUS’ COLLOQUIES, Gerard.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE WITNESS CROSS-EXAMINED.

We are old friends —

You are a gentleman, whom all respect

Most justly

. I'll tell you candidly,

Without the least false harmony of disguise,

Upon my word I know not what to think.

HORNE'S *Cosmo de Medici*.

Two days after this, I was again at S——, on my way back to the metropolis. I had ridden thither, and I was to sleep at the Hotel, so as to proceed early on the following morning, by one of the public conveyances. I did not, this time, pay a visit to my friend Arundel, for my mind was in such a state of inquietude and excitement, that I preferred the solitude of an Inn.

But it happened that I was not fated to pass my evening alone, for I had scarcely quitted the stables, after having looked to the horses, and entered the coffee-room, ere I beheld old Smith coming out to meet and to welcome me.

“What are you doing here?” I exclaimed.

“Why, I thought that I told you the last time we met, that I was going to see the doctor,” said Smith.

“Oh! yes, to see old Goodenough; but what a long visit you have paid!”

“I have been elsewhere, though,” said Smith, “visiting some of our old school-fellows; but I’m going back, to-morrow, to London.”

“So am I—we’ll travel up together—”

“*Volontiers*; but where have you been?”

“To Charlton Abbey.”

“What a strange vagrant creature you are! Don’t you think that it would be more respectable if you could control your erratic propensities. But what account can you render of yourself? What have you been doing, this last fortnight?”

“My life has been crowded with incidents.”

“Oh! I do not at all doubt,” returned Smith, “that you have got into plenty of scrapes, which you dignify with the title of incidents. But tell me, what good you have done.”

“A great deal; that is, I expect much good *will* accrue from my doings.”

“ Ah! always the future in *rus*—your mountains are always in labour—your good always prospective—but speak out, Doveton, for I like to hear the proceedings of a psychological curiosity like yourself.”

“ *A psychological curiosity!*—but come, Smith, I will tell you. Remember, though, that I speak confidentially, and that what I tell you is a profound secret.”

“ Oh! I hate secrets,” returned Smith, “ I’d rather that you would not tell me.”

“ What! can’t you keep them?”

“ I dare say that I could, if I were to try; but I have no ambition to make the trial.”

“ Nonsense; but I wish you to listen, because I want your advice; and when you have listened, I am sure that you will see there is occasion for secrecy.”

“ If I can do you any service by listening,” returned Smith, “ I will lend an ear to your story. But don’t be very prosy about it; for I hate a long-winded—”

“ Upon my word, Smith,” I exclaimed, waxing somewhat wroth with the man of sense, “ you are the most provoking—yes, and the most inconsistent—though you pique yourself upon your consistency—of mortals. You ask me, one moment to render an account of myself; say that you like to hear of my proceedings, and then you make

it a favour to listen to me, and tell me not to be prosy."

"Go on——"

"It is not my nature to be prosy, but I won't quarrel with you any more: So listen,"—and I began, succinctly as possible, to acquaint Smith, with all that I knew concerning the history both of Anstruther and the Moores. Smith listened with wrapt attention, and apparently with a high degree of interest—it was certainly no every-day narrative that I was now communicating to my friend. But suddenly, when I was well entangled in the labyrinth of my story, I came to a full stop."

"Why, what's the matter now?" asked Smith.

"Oh!" I said, and I stammered as I spoke, "I begin to think that I have no right in the world to let you into Mr. Anstruther's secrets. It is a great breach of confidence, I fear—very improper and very dishonourable."

"You have not," replied Smith, "let me into his secrets, I am sure. You have only told me what your uncle communicated to you relating to Mrs. Moore, or Mrs. Kirby, and what you have seen of the lady herself. But tell me nothing, I beseech you, that Mr. Anstruther has told you in confidence, for it *would* be dishonourable so to do."

I pondered for a few minutes, and then replied, "But I can make the story to you perfectly intel-

ligible, without any breach of confidence whatever," and then I proceeded even to the end, winding up with this notable peroration :

"And now, Smith, after all I have told you — after summing all the evidence, and considering all the coincidences of the case, does it not appear to you, as it appears to me, very plain (with a marked emphasis) *that Michael and Ella Moore are the children of Mr. Anstruther?*"

"*Not—in—the—least,*" replied Smith, with still more decision of emphasis.

"I wonder at your little comprehension."

"And 't at your great credulity.'"

"But consider the strong chain of evidence —"

"A Grand Jury would throw out such a bill without five minutes consultation."

"But let us go over it link by link —"

"The very way to prove its nullity —"

"And, firstly, the book then, Smith. The *Erasmus*, which Mrs. Moore gave me. Consider this circumstance well. It undoubtedly had once been Anstruther's — his initials and his coat-of-arms are in it."

"But that proves nothing," returned Smith, "books like money, often change their owners."

"Oh! but this was the very identical book which Mrs. Anstruther took with her when she went —"

“What is that?” asked Smith, eagerly, “you did not tell me that before.”

I felt the warm blood mounting to my face, and then I sickened, for I had grievously committed myself, “Oh! Smith,” I faltered out, “the words escaped me unawares; I did not intend to tell you — I am not fit to be trusted with a secret — how mean and dishonourable, and contemptible, I must appear in your eyes.”

“Not at all; only rather unguarded; but now that you have let out the fact, we may as well make the most of it as evidence. You say that Mrs. Anstruther, when she embarked, had certainly this book in her possession.”

“Yes, or another resembling it.”

“As is most probably the case — ”

“But then the fifty pound note.”

“Well, and how does your ingenuity account for that?”

“Why; I’ll tell you — of all men in the world, the most careless about money matters, is Anstruther. I don’t know any one more likely to have placed a bank note between the pages as a mark.”

“But I thought you said that it was fastened in with a wafer.”

“And so it was — but in all my calculations, I have quite lost sight of this fact. But now you mention it, I think that Mrs. Anstruther — as,

owing to certain circumstances, she embarked suddenly, may in her hurry have taken the note from her desk about the same time that she took the book, and having no other purse ready at the time, she may have made a purse of the book, and put the note between its pages for security."

"Ingenious — but it goes no way to establish the identity of the volume. However, Doveton, I will cede this point to you. The Erasmus now in your possession is the very identical book, which Mrs. Anstruther had with her when she was drowned. What does this prove? Simply, that though the vessel went down, some part, at least, of its cargo was washed ashore. Now for it; what next?"

"Excuse me for a moment," and I left the room, but soon returned with two pictures in my hand. "Now look at these portraits, Smith, the one is the likeness of Ella Moore, the other of Mary Penruddock, — now is there not a wonderful resemblance?"

"But what has Mary Penruddock to do with it?"

"Mrs. Anstruther and Mary Penruddock are one; but do you not see the resemblance?"

"Undoubtedly — there is a very strong resemblance, it would be impossible to help seeing it — but there may have been two Mary Penruddocks in England at the same time."

“Oh ! yes ; there may have been certainly, and two Ella Moores.”

“But does Anstruther acknowledge this picture to be a good likeness of his wife ?”

“He has never seen it.”

“Who painted it then ?”

“Arundel painted it in Flanders.”

“Was she ever there as Miss Penruddock ?”

This staggered me. “I should think not, nay, I am sure not.” But then, after a pause, I added, “Arundel took the sketch unknown to the parties, and only discovered the young lady’s name by seeing it on the lid of a box, or in the cover of a book — if the latter, her maiden name may well have been presented to his view.”

“Granted.”

“And, moreover, I must tell you that, upon showing Ella’s portrait to Anstruther, he was strangely agitated, and it seemed that certain painful recollections had been called to his mind by the sight of the picture.”

“Another proof, certainly, that Ella Moore is wonderfully like Mrs. Anstruther — the pictures themselves bear sufficient evidence without any further corroboration. But likeness does not prove consanguinity. Any thing else ?”

“Yes ; Michael Moore tells me that among the effects of his reputed mother, he has discovered a jewel box, and that many of the trinkets

bear the initials M. C. P. Now these letters signify nothing less than Mary Catherine Penraddock."

"We'll dismiss this as we dismissed the *Erasmus* — cargo cast ashore," said Smith.

"But coupling this with Ella's likeness to Mrs. Anstruther —"

"A singular coincidence," rejoined Smith.

"Then Michael Moore distinctly remembers a time, when he lived in a great house with porticoes and pillars, and rolled on cushions of velvet."

"He has probably dreamt of these things, and now he fancies that he remembers them."

"But Ella Moore recollects the same."

"Oh! they may have been once in their lives in a fine house, and the very strangeness of the circumstances causes them both to remember it. You cannot derive any thing from such a source as this, I am sure."

"Very little in the way of proof, but much in the way of conjecture."

"You have conjectures enough," returned Smith, "what we now want is proof."

"We must find out Paul Phillips."

"Who is he?"

"The man who *knows all* — as Mrs. Moore told me ere she died."

"Well; the sooner you find him the better —"

but just tell me this. If Mrs. Anstruther and her children were drowned, how can they now possibly be living?"

"Not very easily to be sure — but my hope is that they were not drowned."

"And you think then that this Mrs. Moore is — or rather was — the wife of your friend, and that the young Moores are his children? Mrs. Moore, *alias* Kirby, *alias* Anstruther — well done, Doveton — a very she-Cerberus, 'three gentlewomen at once.'"

"No, no, Smith — I think nothing of the kind. I have satisfactorily proved that Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Colonel Kirby are one. Mrs. Anstruther has naught to do with this."

"Then what on earth can Mrs. Colonel Kirby have to do with Mrs. Anstruther's children?"

"I don't know."

"Nor any one else — and how comes it that in all these conjectures of yours, you leave out the elder boy Moore?"

"Because he is so unlike the others."

"Have you no other reason?"

"Why, yes — Mrs. Anstruther's first-born was deformed."

"And what has become of him, then?"

"I really can't tell."

"Nor any one else, Doveton. 'Tis altogether an airy thing of the imagination — utterly without

substance — nothing that can be admitted as evidence, nothing that can convince the reason, nothing that can ever be reduced to proof. If ever you give me a brief, Doveton, when I am called to the bar, give me a better case than this, or never employ me as your counsel.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FELLOW-TRAVELLERS.

The first a man of sense, yet I dislike him,
 He reasons and retreats
 The other hath a wit beyond himself;
 Its spirit uttering things he knows not whence,
 Why, how, or whither.

HORNE'S *Cosmo de Medici*.

SMITH and I travelled up together, on the outside of the coach to London. It was very cold, and I was by no means inclined to be communicative during the journey. Indeed I am the most sulky of travellers always, for I seldom condescend to bestow a word, upon any of my *compagnons du voyage*.

Smith, on the other hand, was intolerably loquacious, whilst I was wrapt up in a shroud of thought, speculating, scheming, foretelling, my whole soul with Anstruther and the Moores, and the external world being as nothing to me, Smith was talking to one of his fellow-travellers upon the most common-place subjects imaginable, asking all manner of trivial questions, and taking the utmost pains to elicit information, which *I* would not have burthened myself with possessing. It appeared that the man, with whom he was conversing, was a farmer; for Smith, with as much minuteness as if he had been one of a committee of inquiry, was cross-examining the wretch upon divers matters connected with the state of agriculture, and other things equally unimportant. The soil of the county through which we were passing, the general condition of the poorer orders, the necessity of a poor law reform, the breed of horses, the adaptation of machinery to agricultural purposes, the progress of rail-roads, and other matters *ejusdem generis*, unworthy as I thought to arrest the attention of any creature professing to be rational, were inquired into, and descanted upon by Smith, just as though he had been actually interested in them.

When the farmer left us, which he did at A——, Smith turned round to me and said, "If you wish

to gain information, Doveton, mount every man you meet upon his hobby."

^ We had not proceeded far before there was a claimant for the seat which had just been vacated by the farmer, and in less than five minutes the indefatigable Smith had discovered what was the calling of the man, and there he was hammering away at the coal trade, just as perseveringly as a quarter of an hour before he had been labouring at the state of agriculture. It was really quite enough to sicken one.

I don't know why I should have been so indignant against the corn and the coal trades; for I confess, that I should not like very much to go without bread when I am hungry, and without a fire when I am cold.

But I cannot endure common-place —

I don't think that it would be very easy to determine the precise boundaries of common-place. I cannot pause to investigate the matter now, but I may just casually observe that in my younger days I looked upon all that country, which lies beyond

" the limits of the sphere of dream,"

as indisputably the land of common-place; and all people, but the visionaries of the world, regarded I as the inhabitants of that land.

We had accomplished nearly a moiety of our journey, when a sudden thought flashed upon my brain, and laying my hand upon the shoulder of my friend, I exclaimed in an eager voice, "Smith, I have just thought of something that escaped my recollection last night."

"Don't speak quite so loud," said Smith, in an under-tone, "unless you wish *all* our fellow-travellers to hear you."

"I quite forgot where we are," said I, moderating my voice.

"I don't doubt it," returned the man of sense; "for you have been travelling in Dream-land, these last three hours."

"But at all events I have dreamt something worth telling you."

"Oh! if it is only a dream —"

"Nay, Smith," I interrupted, "it is a fact."

"But facts and visions are so inextricably blended in your mind, that you cannot separate the one from the other."

"Oh! yes, I can — now listen to this — I quite forgot to tell you yesterday, that Michael Moore perfectly remembers having been in a storm at sea, when a child."

"Does he, indeed?"

"Yes," said I, triumphantly, for I thought that this was a strong presumption in favour of the case that I was so anxious to make out.

Smith smiled one of his incredulous, hope-subduing smiles, and then said, "Mr. Moore was a soldier ; was he not ?"

"Certainly — a serjeant of artillery."

"Employed in the Peninsular war ?"

"Yes — and killed at St. Sebastian."

"England is an island — is it not ?"

"How can you ask such a question ?"

"Because I thought it very probable," replied Smith, "that this circumstance had escaped you altogether."

"What do you mean ?"

"That taking the fact of the insular position of England into consideration, it is probable that in passing from Spain to Great Britain, the Moores traversed the sea, and made use of a ship."

"Undoubtedly — how ridiculous you are !"

"Well, Doveton — and it is not altogether impossible that they may have met with stormy weather on their passage from Spain, as Mrs. Anstruther did on her passage from Dublin. Experience I believe has ascertained the fact, that the Bay of Biscay is exposed to the influence of the winds full as much as the Irish Channel."

There was something in all this so very unanswerable, that I held my peace for the remainder of the journey ; whilst Smith continued his sickening conversation with the coal-merchant, the coal-meter, the coal-heaver, or whatever the

creature really was. I cannot say that I felt very sorry when we began to rattle along the streets of the metropolis, and I knew that in less than an hour I should have passed the threshold of my Uncle Pemberton's house.

CHAPTER XVI.

VALENTINE AND ORSON.

They are *not* brothers — never yet were men
More different in their natures. Brothers, say you ?
Why then the graceful, meek-eyed antelope
Is brother to the shaggy-coated wolf —
The gentle dove twin-sister to the vulture —
Or any other creatures most unlike,
Born of one womb.

MS.

I HAD scarcely passed the garden gates of the rectory, when to my surprise, I beheld Michael Moore running out bare-headed to salute me. It was nearly dark, but he had caught the outline of my figure from the window, and he was determined to be the first to greet me.

“What! you here, Michael, too,” I exclaimed, “how very, very glad I am of that.”

“Oh! yes, I arrived here yesterday,” replied Michael, “I thought that Ella would wait for me in London, and when I reached there I found that she was gone, and they told me that she had gone to your uncle’s, and that you had gone to Mr. Anstruther’s; but here we are once more congregated — Lawrence, and Ella, and ‘little Bo-peep’ as we call her — oh! how grateful we ought to be to your uncle.”

“Is my uncle at home, Michael?”

“No—he has gone out to dine, but Miss Pemberton is at home. They are all sitting together round the fire—how happy they will be to see *you*.—You cannot think how we have talked about you—it is difficult to say who is the most eloquent, but I rather think that Ella bears the palm.”

“Bless her—God bless her!” I exclaimed with all the fervour of a young lover.

And there they sate round the fire—Ella, and my cousin Emily, and Lawrence and little Beau-pied. How beautiful they all looked together.

Ella and my cousin Emily sate side by side, and on my cousin’s other hand was a vacant chair, whereon Michael had lately been sitting. Little Beau-pied sate upon a stool at Larry’s feet with her head resting against the knees of her rotoc-

I to do in this emergency? Retreat? No, not without another effort to arouse the genius of the place. "Mr. Phillips!" I cried aloud, in a voice which shook the crazy wainscoting.

And a strange, lachrymose voice issued from beneath the drugget on the bed, "Don't talk so loud, or you'll wake me; why, a noise like that might disturb the Seven Sleepers, themselves."

This was certainly a strange reception; but I had conversed with this creature before, and knowing his eccentricities, I was not startled by the novelty of his ways. "Mr. Phillips," I repeated; but "Get along with you," was the only answer I received.

"Is your name Paul Phillips?" I asked, nothing daunted, "and are you the individual, who was lately attached to Mr. Centaur's troop of equestrians?"

And looking towards the bed, I saw the drugget slightly upraised, and from beneath it emerged into sight, first a bare shaven scalp, and then a pair of large, goggle eyes. "Don't you see that I'm fast asleep, Sir?" asked the *ci-devant* clown of the circus.

But as he rolled his great eyes upon me, he thought that they had beheld me before. He looked again—then he put out a hand and removed the drugget from his face. He doubted,

and doubting, he stared at me—then the remembrance of our way-side rencontre flashed upon him, and he suddenly started bolt-upright in his bed. Never was any thing more ridiculous than the aspect of the man, but I was bound on too serious an adventure to feel any propensity to mirth.

“ Oh ! Sir, I beg your honour’s pardon, Sir,” he began, in an obsequious manner, “ I did not know who I was addressing, Sir ; you are the young legal gentleman, I believe, whom I once had the pleasure of conversing with, on the high-road, near Merry-vale, are you not, Sir ? I remember, though it was some time ago, you wanted a next of kin.”

“ Stop a moment, Mr. Phillips, we’ll come to that, presently—your name is Paul Phillips, I take it ? ”

“ Ah ! you young gentlemen of the law have such an insinuating way of pumping—cross-examining you call it—that there’s no resisting you. Paul Phillips is my name. I have lately been called Signor Paulo Filosofo—for a name, you know, is every thing to a clown. As plain Paul Phillips, I seldom raised a laugh ; but, as Signor Paulo Filosofo, they roared at me. As plain Paul Phillips all my wisdom was taken for foolery ; but as Signor Paulo Filosofo, all my foolery was taken for wisdom. A name, Sir—

a name is a marvellous ramrod, to stuff an old joke down the throats of the public."

"So it is—so it is, Mr. Phillips; but tell me now have you any recollection of a young man named Lawrence Moore?"

"Oh! a very distinct recollection—a very distinct recollection, indeed. I hope, Sir, that nothing has happened to him; I hope, Sir, that he isn't dead."

"*Dead*—oh! no; I saw him this morning. I am happy to say that he is recovering, rapidly, from the effects of his late fever—no danger, no danger whatever—a fine youth, Mr. Phillips, is this Lawrence Moore—is he not? I think that you were acquainted with his mother—a nice old lady, as ever lived."

"Yes, I *was* acquainted with his mother," said Paul Phillips, and he shuddered as he spoke.

"You knew her, perhaps, in Ireland—by the bye, can you tell me, Mr. Phillips, how ~~many~~ children she had."

"*Children*, Sir—only ~~that~~ one—only the boy Lawrence."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive,—certain."

"Did you *say* that you knew her in Ireland?"

"May-be/ Sir, for there it was that I knew her," and again he shuddered as he spoke.

"Do you feel cold, that you shiver so?" said I.

“ No, no ; — but I was thinking of something — ”

“ May I ask, Mr. Phillips, *of what?* ”

The retired clown was silent ; he shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, and assumed a melancholy expression of countenance, which was, in truth, more ludicrous than pathetic. It was evident, that there was something in his mind, which he did not much wish to divulge ; but I thought that I knew a golden remedy for silence, and I resolved to make use of it without delay.

“ Hark you, Mr. Phillips,” I said, “ it is not for a next of kin that I have come hither to-day ; but it is about a business, which will more certainly be efficacious in filling your purse. I want to gain all the information that I can, relating to Mrs. Moore — she died a week or two ago, at Merry-vale, and I am raking up the circumstances of her life. You knew her — you acknowledge that you knew her — now, if you will tell me *all* that you know about her, I will give you a five-pound note. Remember that I particularly wish to know what it was that made you shudder — ”

“ A five-pound note,” said Phillips, musingly, “ a five-pound note to tell you all I know about Mrs. Moore — knowledge is scarce, sir, — very — did you say a five-pound or a ten-pound note ? ”

"A five-pound note, now, Mr. Phillips," I replied, "before you commence your story, and I'll promise you another if what you communicate brings about the consummation I desire."

"That's rather vague and conditional," returned the *à-devant* clown, "but you look, sir, like one to be trusted too—*fronti nulla fides*, as the Greek poet has written, which means that we may trust to appearances, and your appearances are much in your favour."

I smiled, and taking a bank-note from my purse, proceeded to smooth it upon my knee, whilst I said to Paul Phillips, "Now, sir, if you please, begin with your important history."

Paul stretched out his hand to receive the note, and when he found it safely in his possession, sitting upright in his bed, he commenced his story in the following words.

"My father, sir, was a respectable linendraper—"

But as it happened that I was not particularly anxious to be made acquainted with the history of Mr. Phillips *senior*, and as I was burning with a strong desire to learn all that his son Paul knew relating to the Anstruthers, and the Moores, I interrupted my companion, saying, "If it's not very irregular, Mr. Phillips, we'll come to that point afterwards."

"What, sir, begin at the end?—I *must* begin at the beginning."

"I'm very sorry for it, Mr. Phillips—but couldn't you begin at the place where you met with Mrs. Moore in Dublin?"

"I might, sir, perhaps, if I tried—but depend upon it, I'll get over the ground quicker with my own way of telling a story—Well, sir, my father, as I was going to tell you, was a respectable linendraper in Manchester, I was his only son, sir, and my mother—God bless her!—ruined me by the excess of her kindness. I was first of all a pickle in the nursery—they sent me to school, and I was the biggest scamp there—they took me away, and I was the fastest-goer in the town. My father died and left me all his money. I spent it in much less time than it had taken the governor to make it, and I was soon without a penny in the world. Well, sir—"

"But excuse me, Mr. Phillips, if I say it's not very well. I want to learn something about Mrs. Moore; I'll hear your own history afterwards."

"I have just come to that, sir—I never was prosy, and you must have observed that I am labouring to be concise. At three-and-twenty I was an orphan and a beggar—so I enlisted, sir—I enlisted in the artillery, and was in the same company with this Serjeant Moore, whom you are so anxious to learn all about—"

"Proceed!"

"Serjeant Moore had a wife, sir, and one child—I know, never more than one—he was killed

at St. Sebastian, I think — I was not there, for I soon got tired of the army, and an aunt of mine happening to die, left me some money; so I purchased my discharge, and went from one place to another leading a sort of vagabond life, until in Dublin I chanced to alight on Mrs Moore—no, sir, it was not that either—but on board a little smack bound for Liverpool. La, sir, it makes my blood run cold to think of it. I'm sure it's well worth double the money."

Paul shuddered or pretended to shudder, but I took no notice of this manœuvre on his part, but said to him in an eager voice, "And on board this smack do you remember having seen a young married lady with three little children and a maid?"

"Yes—sir, very well, indeed—a beautiful lady she was too —"

"With light hair?"

"Yes, sir, like gold."

"And blue eyes."

"Yes, sir—the bluest I ever saw—though to be sure I did not see much of her."

"And Mrs. Moore was on board the same vessel with this blue-eyed golden-haired lady?"

"Yes—certainly, sir."

"And do you know the lady's name?"

Paul Phillips shook his head negatively.

"But you remember that she had three little children?"

“Quite well, sir : for something happened after this, which made me remember it too surely,”—and again Paul Phillips shuddered.

“And what were these children?”

“What were they, sir?—young children.”

“But boys or girls?”

“Two boys and a girl.”

“And the eldest—do you remember anything particular about the elder boy?”

“Yes, sir, I remember that he was deformed—”

“And now be so good as to proceed ; you will earn the promised reward.”

And Paul Phillips thus proceeded : “Well, sir, I was going to tell you that I met Mrs Moore on board the smack, and as I had known her husband and seen her before, we began to talk together as old friends, and I remember that I played with her little boy, a fine child about four years old—this, sir, was before we set sail, for I had gone on board a little before the starting hour—but just as we were getting up our canvass, a lady wrapt up in a large cloak, with a maid and three children, came on board, and after speaking a few words to the captain, they all of them went below. I thought the lady looked frightened and unhappy, but she looked exceedingly beautiful, and I remember her face even now. Well, sir, we put out, and a terrible night it was ; I think that I have reason to remember it. A storm came on when

we were in the channel—the Irish channel, you know, sir,—it blew a hurricane—and the thunders roared, and the lightning flashed tremendously—and every soul came on deck, sir,—the women frightened out of their wits—and the men if possible more frightened than the women. I am no sailor, sir, and I know nothing about nautical phrases; but I know that we took down all our sails, and tried to lie to with bare poles, I think they call it—but all this was of no use whatever—the wind blew harder and harder—and our little craft was not particularly sea-worthy. We all had to work at the pumps, for the hold was filling rapidly, and to add to our discomfort, sir, the only boat we had was carried away by a heavy sea, at the very commencement of the storm. Not that it would have been of much use, sir; for no boat could have weathered such a gale; but drowning men will catch at a reed, and it was certain that we were all drowning. Well, sir, the gale increased and with a terrible crash down came our mast—we had but one, for our vessel was only a cutter—and then there was nothing but bustle and confusion upon deck—such screaming and shouting, and swearing—I shall remember it till the day of my death, and never think of it without feeling icy cold as I do now, for it was a terrible time, sir. But to cut the story short, our vessel went down, and only Mrs. Moore and I were saved.”

“But you have abridged the very part of your story,” I exclaimed, in a tone of vexation, “which I am anxious to have most in detail. You say that Mrs. Moore and yourself were the only people saved—did the children all perish with the vessel?”

“No, sir, we saved three children between us—Mrs. Moore’s boy, and two of the children belonging to the beautiful lady.”

“The lady with the golden hair?”

“Yes, sir —”

“But how did you save them?”

“I really can hardly tell you, sir. I found myself clinging to the mast; but how I got there I have not the least recollection.”

“But Mrs. Moore — where was she?”

“Lashed on to the same mast, sir.”

“With her child?”

“With three children.”

“Then she saved them all?”

“Yes — that is to say — she began the work which I helped her to finish.”

“But tell me, Mr. Phillips,” I asked, eagerly, “how she accomplished this great and good work.”

“I’ll tell you, sir, as nearly as I can. When I recovered my senses enough to look about me, I tried to do so; but it was well nigh dark, and I could see nothing at all but an occasional flash of lightning, which helped me to see something

white at the other end of the mast, to which I clung. I cried out, but the wind made such a noise that I suppose I was not heard, or else that the answer returned me was lost ; so thinking in this fearful condition that it would be some small comfort to feel the nearness of some other individual, and hoping besides that we might help one another, I contrived with my hands and knees to scramble, or rather slide, along the mast, till I got to the other end of it, and there I found Mrs. Moore with the three little children."

"But how could she save them all, and yet save herself in this extremity?"

"She had got two of them, sir, in a blanket which she had tied around her in such a manner as to make a sort of hood behind her, and in this two of the children lay snugly as in a great bag, with their little arms round Mrs. Moore's neck. The other child — *her own*, she held in her hands, and she herself was lashed to the mast."

"And I suppose that you took one of the children from her."

"Yes, sir — she gave me the lady's little boy, and intreated me to take charge of him. I did so ; and the little boy was saved."

"You were taken up by some other vessel."

"Yes, sir — by a Liverpool trader, bound to the West Indies : they carried us on to Jamaica, and I did my best to make myself useful ; but I was

never cut out for a sailor, so I did not make much hand of it on board, except once or twice in the gunnery line, when we fell in with — ”

“ Oh ! never mind that ! did Mrs. Moore ever tell you how she came to save Mrs. Anstruther’s children ? ”

“ Whose children, sir ? ” asked Paul Phillips, eagerly.

“ The children of the blue-eyed lady,” I answered, recollecting myself suddenly.

Paul Phillips eyed me with a cunning look, and then answered, “ Yes, sir — she told me that, in the midst of the terrible confusion, when all on board knew that they were sinking, just before the vessel went down, she lashed herself to the broken mast which was lying athwart the deck, and part of it hanging over the water.”

“ Go on — go on, I pray. She then had her own child in her arms ? ”

“ Yes, sir — and she remembered that as the vessel was sinking, a lady — *the* lady — with a blanket wrapt round her — her yellow hair streaming down her back, — one child in her arms, and two children clinging to her knees, cried out, imploring Mrs. Moore, for the love of Heaven to save her children.”

“ And Mrs. Moore took them.”

“ I remember she told me that she scarcely knew how it was done ; but she thinks that the

lady, who was almost wild with terror, took the blanket which she had wrapped round her from her shoulders, and spreading it out, tied two of her children to Mrs. Moore's back, and then endeavoured to lash herself and her other little boy on to the mast beside them. But she had not time to accomplish this — the vessel went down, and she perished."

"And how long did you remain at Jamaica?"

"About three months."

"And Mrs. Moore returned in the same vessel?"

"She did."

"And she kept the children?"

"Yes, and brought them up like her own."

"Did she ever try to discover the father of the children?"

"I think she did — but as we were the only survivors, she did not well know from whom to inquire. She put advertisements into the Dublin papers, but I suppose that they were never answered."

I thought this at first very strange, but I remembered afterwards that Anstruther had gone abroad immediately upon the loss of his wife, and that for some years no tidings were heard of him at home, until it was supposed by his friends that he was dead.

When this occurred to me, I ceased to wonder; and I presently continued my interrogatories.

“Do you know, Mr. Phillips, whether any property was saved out of the wreck?”

“No — and yet I am not quite right in saying so; for some how or other Mrs. Moore escaped with a jewel-box belonging to the lady, whose two children she saved.”

“How came she with it?”

“It was tied up in a corner of the blanket, which the lady wrapped round her children.”

“And can you remember the contents of the box?”

“Yes; I think so — at least I am certain that there was a miniature in it, and a little book — which I thought was somewhat strange.”

“And at this distance do you think that you could identify the box?”

“Hardly; for I only saw it once. I was present when Mrs. Moore opened it for the first time, but I never set eyes on it afterwards; however, I am quite sure that there was a miniature in it and a little book, but I cannot speak certainly to anything else — though I take it, there were earrings and necklaces, and other such gew-gaws in the case.”

“Should you know the picture if you were to see it again?”

“Hardly; it was the portrait of a gentleman — but I cannot answer for anything else.”

"It does not much signify, however — Mr. Phillips, you are sure of your reward."

The eyes of the *ci-devant* clown glistened with delight, and he rubbed together the palms of his hands. "I'm 'nation glad to hear it," he replied, "for I'm desperate low in my finances, and I've got a terrible idle fit upon me — mightily disinclined to work."

"You will make affidavit of these statements, I take it for granted," said I.

"Oh ! yes ; I will kiss the Bible to all I have told you, sir — and write it down on paper if you like."

"You will have no objection, I suppose, to come with me before a magistrate — or at some future period to give evidence in a court of law."

"Court of law, sir ! I can't say that I much like to go into a court of law. 'Tisn't the Old Bailey, is it ?" And Paul Phillips shuddered, as though certain unpleasant reminiscences had been awakened in his mind.

"Oh ! no — a civil, not a criminal court —"

"They aren't generally over civil," said Paul Phillips, with a melancholy smile.

"But you will do all this for a consideration—"

"For a consideration, almost anything, sir—"

"Nay, nothing but to speak the truth. Come, now ; there's no time like the present. I will take

down your evidence now, and then we will go before a magistrate. But one more question, Mr. Phillips — do you think that you remember the face of the blue-eyed lady sufficiently to recognize her picture if you were to see it.”

“I think so; ’twasn’t a face which one would very easily forget.”

“Good ! now we’ll send for some paper.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MIST DISPERSED.

“Most true; if ever truth were pregnant with circumstance; that which you hear you’ll swear you see, there is such unity in the proofs. The mantle of queen Hermione,—her jewel about the neck of it,—the letters of Antigonus, found with it, which they know to be his character,—the majesty of the creature in resemblance to her mother,—the affection of nobleness, which nature shows above her breeding,—and many other evidences proclaim her, with all certainty, to be the king’s daughter.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“WELL; I think that you have made out your case very clearly,” said my uncle Pemberton to me, on the morning after my interview with Paul Phillips, “there can no longer be any doubt, I think, that Michael and Ella Moore are the children of your friend, Mr. Anstruther.”

“Oh! uncle, I am so glad that you think so.

I myself have been long convinced of this, though every now and then I have had my misgivings, knowing that my creative imagination is but too prone to lead me astray."

"But the imagination does not always lead us to false conclusions," returned my uncle, "and the impulses of fancy direct us into the paths of truth almost as often as do the reasonings of common sense. You will have your reward, Gerard,—after long travail, you will have your reward."

"I *am* rewarded, uncle, already—oh! never have I been so happy as now. I feel that I have done something,—that I have laboured to some purpose,—that I shall now be able to repay the debt of gratitude that I owe to Mr. Anstruther. Oh! I am so anxious to acquaint him with my discovery—I burn to disclose the secret."

"But you must not be precipitate, Gerard."

"Precipitate!—there can no longer be any doubt. I have a train of evidence, rendering all things certain."

"You have—but is Mr. Anstruther in a fit state to receive these tidings?"

"Oh! uncle, trust to my caution—"

"Your caution!" and Mr. Pemberton smiled a good-natured smile of significance.

"Don't you think it advisable then, uncle, that I should set out for Charlton Abbey to-night?"

My uncle made no answer, for some minutes ; he looked thoughtful, and then at length he replied, " You said something to me, the other day, about Mr. Anstruther desiring to see me."

" I did, uncle—he is broken down, in body and in mind ; he thinks that he is dying, and he desires to see you."

" Dying !"

" He thinks so—but the tone of his mind is desponding over-much. I am sure that he has many years to live, for the glad tidings, of which I am the bearer, will be to him a medicine more health-bearing than any the physician can supply."

" But, like other powerful medicines, Gerard, it must be administered with the utmost caution. I will help you, my dear boy. I will do all in my power, to bring about that which you desire. You shall set out for Charlton Abbey to-night, and be the bearer of an invitation from me to your friend, Mr. Anstruther."

" What ! asking him to live with you here !"

" Yes, Gerard, there is still room in the rectory for another inmate. You say, that from my lips he desires to receive the spiritual advice, of which he stands so much in need. Shall I deny him this ? Oh ! no, Gerard ; to such as he is, my doors are ever open. Shall I refuse the broken and the contrite sinner, when the Almighty himself is ever ready to welcome him ?"

“Then, I will set out for Charlton Abbey to-night.”

“Yes, Gerard; but I scarcely know how to trust you. Some sudden impulse will urge you to reveal your great secret at once. Be guarded. Such tidings as these must be gradually communicated to the sufferer. Who would think of exposing to the glare of a mid-day sun a man, who, after long years of blindness, has just been restored to sight? Gerard, a sudden revelation of this nature might be the death of Mr. Anstruther at once.”

“Trust me, uncle; for once in my life I will restrain the impulses of my nature. But the children—Michael and Ella; may I not tell them of what I have discovered?”

“After all that you have done, Gerard, no pleasure arising out of your good work ought to be denied to you, and I see no reason why you should not tell Michael and Ella. There is Michael coming towards us; it yet wants half an hour of prayer-time; go you and take a walk with him,—then tell the boy all that you know.”

I obeyed the injunctions of my uncle. Passing my arm through Michael's, I led him into one of the shrubbery walks, and began by making some very common-place remarks, concerning the weather.

I knew that Michael would enter upon the subject nearest his heart, so I left him to commence the interesting conversation. We had not conversed together in private, since the evening on which he had visited me in my chamber, and been interrupted by the entrance of Lawrence. I was not wrong; after a few desultory remarks, he said to me, in an earnest tone, "Oh! Gerard, I have been longing to speak to you, alone; for, I am sure that you know more than you will tell me, relating to the history of my birth."

I was silent, and Michael, laying his hand upon my arm, and suddenly halting as he spoke, cried out in impetuous accents, "You *do* know, Gerard, so tell me, I beseech you—you do know, and it is cruel thus to torment me."

"Have you the miniature, Michael!" said I, in a meek voice, and I looked kindly at my friend.

"Yes, round my neck—it is my father's picture, and I am sure that you know his name."

"*I do.*"

"Then, for the love of Heaven, tell me, Gerard, whose picture it is."

"I will—it is Mr. Anstruther's portrait!"

"Mr. Anstruther's!—your friend, Mr. Anstruther's! Gerard, you are not making a mock of me. They say that the face is like mine, and this

picture was found in the possession of one reputed my mother. Ha! is it possible then?"—and he clasped his forehead with one of his hands, as though he were endeavouring to collect his distracted thoughts; "is it possible, then, that Mrs. Kirby?—no, no; if Mr. Anstruther be my father—I am not, I cannot be her child."

"They never met; they never beheld one another."

"Then I am not a child of shame."

"No, Michael."

"And yet, the son of Mr. Anstruther."

"That portrait is assuredly his."

"But, Gerard, you know more than this; by the love which you have ever borne toward me—by the love which you bear towards Ella—I intreat, I conjure you to speak out, and to conceal no tittle of the knowledge which you possess, relating to me and my parentage. Gerard, you are kind and good, you would not torture me, I am sure."

"Not for the world, Michael—listen then, and I will tell you all I know. Oh! my friend, how hard have I laboured to elicit the strange truths, which now I am about to reveal to you; and at length have I reaped the harvest of my desires. I *do* know, Michael, who you are. I do know who are your parents;" and then briefly, but distinctly as possible, I laid before him the chain of

evidence, which proved him to be the son and heir of Mr. Anstruther.

Michael stood still, as I spoke, leaning heavily on my arm all the while. He turned his face towards mine, but moved not; there was a rigid look in his face, and his eyes wore a fixed appearance, as though they gazed but beheld nothing. Ever and anon there was a slight convulsive motion of his nether lip, which was the only life-like manifestation, which his marble features betrayed. When I ceased to speak, he stretched out his arms, threw them suddenly around my neck, and laying his head upon my shoulder, hysterically he sobbed aloud.

We mingled our tears together, for my eyes rained plentifully. I wept partly from sympathy, and partly from excess of joy.

Silently we turned towards the rectory. I cannot write what Michael Moore said to me before we crossed the threshold of the house.

But to Ella, still was this history unknown.—

Let it not be thought, because in the latter pages of this book, I have said but little of the great love, which I bore towards Ella Moore, that my affection diminished as I advanced in years, or that I was in any wise a cold-blooded lover. I have said very little about my love, thinking that the actions, which I have recorded, must have expressed it plainly enough. All my doings

were manifestations of this love. I lived, toiled, struggled, endured, only for love. They who cannot trace the mainsprings of all my actions must, indeed, be wilfully blind.

I was left alone with Ella, on that morning. Seating myself beside the beloved one, I took her little hand into mine, and looking upon it smilingly, I said, "Ella, methinks that this small white hand is an index of high birth."

Ella blushed; and then, looking into my face, she said, with a sweet smile, though her face wore a thoughtful aspect, "Often does an index indicate falsely. There is no rule without an exception."

"Oh! but small white hands are very certain tests of aristocracy. Napoleon, and Byron, and Ali Pacha, have all been of this opinion."

"A trick of their self-love," returned Ella. "I dare say, that they had white hands, themselves."

"But tell me now, Ella; would it make you happy, if it were proved, beyond all doubt, that you are the daughter of a great man?"

"I am an orphan," returned Ella, thoughtfully.

"And, therefore, you could not grieve to find that you have a parent living."

Ella cast down her eyes, but answered not, and

I continued, "Methinks, you would change a dead parent for a living one. Better to rejoice over a treasure found, than to grieve over one lost."

"I do not understand you," said Ella.

"Do you ever attempt to look into the future—do you ever speculate upon your probable destiny?"

"Michael and I together have talked over our plans; but as yet we have made no definite arrangements. Sir Reginald has promised to get him employment, and wherever he goes, I will go—his home will be my home, and his people my people."

"But you will ~~not~~ dwell with him all your life long—"

"And why not?" asked Ella, looking up into my face with an expression of beautiful simplicity.

"Because, peradventure, you might find another friend, with whom you would rather live all your days, than with Michael."

"What other friend, Gerard? I think that I must be very dull this morning, for I do not understand half of what you say."

"Perhaps, it is that I am obscure. But, tell me, is there no one in the world, whom you love even better than Michael?"

Ella spoke not; but the blush, which my question elicited, was an answer more significant than words.

"Tell me, Ella," and I took her hand into

mine, "is there no one whom you love better than Michael?"

"I am fatherless and motherless," said Ella.

"But the love of kindred is not always the strongest — Ella, dear Ella!" and passed my arm around her waist: "is there no one beside your brother, whom you would be content to live with to the end of your days?"

Ella answered not; her head drooped, and slightly her frame trembled.

"Do not be angry with me, Ella, for asking you these strange questions. Indeed, indeed, I am not sporting with you. Tell me, my sweet girl, is your brother Michael dearer to you than all the world beside? Is there no one for whose sake you would leave him? Is there no one dearer to you than Michael?" And as I said this, I drew the young maiden closer to my side, and bending down, I looked into her eyes with an expression of supplicating fondness.

Ella lifted up her head, and silently she turned her face towards me — oh! such a look of tenderness and love was there. I no longer desired that she should speak.

She laid her head upon my shoulder, and the only word that she uttered was "Gerard!"

We were happy — but for a few brief minutes. Such joy as this could not last. The dream was

soon over; and Ella Moore was the first to awake into consciousness.

Suddenly she withdrew herself from my embraces. "Gerard," she said in a decisive tone of voice, with a supernatural effort of strength collecting all the powers of her mind, to aid her in this extremity, "Gerard, this must not—this ought not to be. We can never be to one another more than we are now—already I fear that we are too much. Forgive me that I have ever dared to regard you with any other feelings than of humble respect and gratitude. You are far above me in rank, education, riches, everything—I am fit only to be the handmaid of such as you are. I am nothing but a poor cottage girl, and I am not so selfish as to desire that you should demean yourself by thinking of me as being any other than a lowly dependent upon your bounty. I know that you are generous and devoted—I know that you would willingly set aside what the world calls the distinctions of society; but I love you too well to suffer this sacrifice to be made on my account. We had better part—we had better dwell asunder. It is decreed that we are to move in different spheres—Michael will labour for me, and protect me—we are not ever likely to cross one another in the paths of life. A few days will divide us for ever. Forget that you have ever known me. My prayers will

ever be lifted up for your safety — my blessing will ever be upon your head. Forgive me, that I have spoken thus plainly — I fear that my words have caused you anguish ; but believe me that I have no other desire but the advancement of your happiness and welfare. Mr. Doveton, it would be better for us both that I should leave this place with all speed — it would be better — ” but she could utter not one word more. She had no longer any strength to support her. The trial was too great — it was an effort beyond her nature that she was struggling to make. She could not subdue her rising emotions — they overcame her thoroughly at last, and hiding her face between her hands she burst into a paroxysm of tears.

Then presently she rose from her seat, and moved towards the door ; I followed her, and gently taking her by the hand, I prevented her sudden retreat. “ Yet, stay, Ella — but a few words more ere we part — sit down and dry your tears, for that which has caused them to flow so plentifully exists but in your own mind. Ella you are my equal, and more than my equal. What was that you told me in the spring, about the cushions of green velvet ? ”

“ A foolish fancy of mine,” said Ella, dashing away her tears as she spoke.

“ Nay, Ella, it was no foolish fancy, but a remembrance of that which once was — of a time

when you were a dweller in a splendid mansion — a child born to wealth and station. Ella, did I not tell you when we parted upon the green hill behind your cottage, that I would put forth my whole strength in the endeavour to clear up this strange mystery? I have kept my promise — I have laboured diligently, and a great success has attended my labours. Now, sweetest, listen to what I have to tell you. Already does Michael know the truth. You are neither an orphan nor a cottage maiden — but the daughter of Mr. Anstruther — my friend.”

* * * * *

That evening I set out for Charlton Abbey; and Ella kissed me on the forehead ere I went.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WRETCHED END OF THE IDOLATER.

• I doubt my body
 Will hardly serve me through ; while I have laboured,
 It has decayed ; and now that I demand
 Its best assistance, it will crumble fast—
 A sad thought—a sad fate,

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

I'll give thee proofs,
 Great God, I thank thee—proofs !
 Are there not here the lineaments of her
 Who made me happy once—the voice, now still,
 That bade the long-sealed fount of love gush out—
 It is my child !

TALFOURD'S *Ion*.

“How feel you now, Edwin?” I asked, as I sate by Anstruther's bed-side, in my uncle's house, a few days after the occurrence of the events detailed in the last chapter.

"I feel, Gerard, as a man may feel who has not many days to live. That journey was too much for me—but what does it matter? Methinks, I have lived too long already—too long in rebellion against God."

"But now——"

"Yes, *now*, Gerard, I have submitted myself meekly to His will. I bow down humbly at His footstool, and kiss the hand that has smitten me——"

"And like the Shunamite woman——"

"I am ready to say *It is well*."

"Be sure that God will reward you."

"But not as she of old was rewarded."

"How know you, Edwin?—such things have been ere now."

"That the sea has given up its dead? Folly! but peradventure I may go unto them, although they cannot come unto me."

Then after a pause he continued, "I have just had a sweet dream, Gerard—a sweet dream of peace. I was sitting in a fair country, with my wife and my three children, and my elder boy was no longer deformed, but beautiful as his brother and sister. And you were there too, Gerard, with *your* bride, and she was like unto mine——" Then breaking off suddenly, he asked, in an altered tone of voice, "Gerard, do you remember the day when

you showed me the picture of your beloved Ella, and I was so strangely affected by the sight."

"Oh! well—very well indeed, Edwin."

"Now, I will tell you, for there is no reason why I should conceal any thing from you. I will tell you that the picture, both in line and colour, bore so strange a resemblance to my poor saint-like wife, now in heaven, that I could almost have taken it for her own portrait, and this it was that excited me so much. Gerard, I have a strange desire to see your beloved Ella. Where is she? Can I look upon her ere I die?"

"You can."

"'Tis a foolish wish—but perhaps it will be my last. Did you say that the Moores are in Devonshire?"

"Not now—their mother is dead, and being orphans, my uncle has received them into his house. They are dwelling now beneath this very roof."

"Ha!—beneath this very roof."

"Yes; and both Michael and Ella looked upon you last night, as you slept."

"Looked upon me? Came they into my chamber?"

"Yes, Edwin—but only for a minute."

"And why were they so anxious to see me?"

I knew not what to say. I could not speak the truth, and answer, "That they might look upon the face of their parent."

I hesitated, and after a little while, I replied, "They desired to behold the man of whom I had spoken to them so often, and who has been to me more than a father."

"Then you will bring Ella to see me again?"

"I will,"—and oh! how I longed to add, "For she is your long-lost daughter."

But I restrained myself; and yet I knew not how to act in this most painful emergency. It was, alas! but too plain to me that Anstruther was dying, and that in all human probability, a few more days would complete the sum of his existence. I had found him at Charlton Abbey, in a wretchedly debilitated condition; he had eagerly accepted my uncle's invitation; but the journey, though we were two days upon the road, had been too much for him, and when he arrived at the rectory, he was in a state of such entire exhaustion, that it was found necessary to convey him immediately to his chamber, and lay him upon the bed, from which it was but little likely he would ever be able to rise. What, then was to be done? I was sore afraid that a sudden shock would kill him outright; and yet I could not suffer him to die in ignorance of my great discovery. Perhaps—yet the chance was very small—the knowledge,

which I had to impart to him, might eventually prove his salvation; but it was far more probable that the result of such a disclosure would be fatal to him; for the lamp of life was flickering, and the slightest current of air would have been sufficient to extinguish it altogether.

And alas! I had arrived too late with pardon to the condemned criminal. But a few months sooner, and I might have seen the consummation of all my fondest desires, and stood upon the very pinnacle of human happiness, looking down upon the fair work that I had accomplished. But now—oh! it wrung my heart to think that what I had done would be productive of more wretchedness than bliss—that after all my labours, all my struggles, all my sufferings for the sake of others, I was doomed to be the cause of a world of anguish, which but for me never would have been. That which I desired to do I had done, but the success which had crowned my endeavours was fraught with agony, and not with delight. Failure would have been better than such success—success coming a little too late.

Such were the thoughts that came over me, causing my heart to sink, as I sate silently by Anstruther's bed-side, after uttering the two last monosyllables.

I knew not what to do; whichever way I looked despair was staring me in the face.

But Anstruther, turning his wan face towards me, and laying his thin, cold hand upon mine, broke through the silence, saying, "When will you bring her to me, Gerard—when will you bring Ella Moore?"

I could not bear it—this dreadful state of suspense and incertitude, and this necessity of constant equivocation, were insupportable to me; better any thing than this—better any thing than this mixture of doubt and fear, tearing my heart to pieces. I could not conceal the truth any longer; and I resolved to disclose all that I knew.

And yet I saw the necessity of acting with extreme caution, for a sudden revelation would have been too much for Anstruther. Impetuous as I was by nature, and thorough-going as were all my actions, I did not so far commit myself on this occasion, as to burst suddenly upon my friend with the strange disclosure I was about to make to him. I knew that I must lead him step by step to this knowledge. I knew that the light which I was about to shed upon his mental vision must be suffered to 'dawn' gradually upon him, not to blaze forth at once, in its full meridian brightness. But I was not a practised tactician, and I found myself in a painful embarrassment.

"When shall I see Ella Moore?" asked An-

struther; "when shall I see this living portrait of my beloved one in the heavens?"

"Oh! soon — very soon, dear Edwin—in a little time I will bring her to you. How I wish that you had known her before, for, I am sure that you would have loved her as your daughter. Yes —though she has dwelt all her life in a cottage, she is even fit to be *your* daughter. She is not what she seems, I am sure. I scarcely think that she can be the daughter of the widow-woman, who brought her up in this lowly way of life. There is some strange mystery enveloping her birth. When the mother died—I mean Mrs. Moore—when Mrs. Moore died, there was found a box of jewels amongst her effects, with a portrait—a miniature of a gentleman——"

"A box of jewels, with a miniature!—but I will not interrupt you; go on with your story, Gerard — go on with your story, I beseech you." "

"Nay, Edwin—not if it is to excite you thus—it is not good for you, that you should be excited."

"Excited! I am not excited, Gerard—I am calm, I never was calmer."

I laid my fingers upon his wrist, and his pulses galloped. "The tell-tale blood belies you, Edwin."

“Go on, Gerard — I am only feverish with curiosity—allay that, and the fever will be allayed — what were you going to say about the miniature?”

“That it was the portrait of a gentleman about four-and-twenty,—and strange to say that it is something like you.”

“Like me! and is the picture in the house?” gasped Anstruther, “like me! can you get possession of the picture?”

“Pray compose yourself—this excitement is dangerous above all things. I wish that I had not told you this.”

“But as you have begun, so you must finish — I am not excited in the least — but if any thing can excite a man, it is curiosity — tell me all, and I shall become calm as a lake in summer — what more do you know about this miniature?”

“Nothing more than that the picture is like you.”

“Bring it to me, Gerard, I beseech you,—bring me the picture that I may look upon it.”

“But why are you so anxious to see it?”

“I will tell you, Gerard — when my poor Mary perished in the great waters, she had in her possession a portrait—a miniature portrait of myself. Methinks I should know it if I were to see the picture — so bring me that of which you speak.”

“But what if it should be the identical picture — property has been often saved from a wreck.”

“And persons too — such things have been ere now — oh! Gerard, you have awakened within me hopes, which until this very moment I have never ventured to encourage — it may be that they did not all perish — but bring the picture that I may look upon it.”

“*There* — it now hangs around my neck — Edwin is this your picture?”

I put the miniature into the sick man's hand — he needed not to look at it a second time, for the first glance was sufficient to assure him that he had often beheld it before. Grasping the picture convulsively, and sinking back on his pillow, he cried out, in a choaking voice, “It is, Gerard, it is! Assuredly as I am a miserable sinner, I gave this picture to Mary Penruddock.”

Then, after a little while, sitting upright in his bed, and making a mighty effort to compose himself, he said to me in a voice of assumed calmness, enunciating each word slowly and distinctly, “Gerard, you knew Mrs. Moore very well — bore she any likeness to Ella?”

“None whatever.”

“And her eyes?”

“Were hazel — her hair dark —”

“Enough — enough. I knew her not. But how could I ever have been so mad as to en-

courage a hope so monstrous. Yet stranger things have happened than this — the girl, at least the picture of the girl is the very image of my wife — and the boy, Michael I think you called him, what is he like ?”

“Something like your picture — ”

“Ha ! like my picture — a singular coincidence — but stranger things have happened ere now. Do not think that I am excited in the least ; I feel so calm and so strong, that I do not think a thunderbolt falling at my feet would have power to make me tremble. Go on, Gerard — there are two boys, I think you said — Michael is the younger — but the elder youth, I forget his name. Is he — is he — *a hunch-back* ?”

“He is tall and comely, and beautifully proportioned — ”

“But, Michael, you say is like me — what age is he ?”

“Nineteen.”

“And Ella ?”

“A year younger than her brother.”

“The ages tally — ’tis a wonderful coincidence, but more wondrous things have come to pass than this. I am weak, and foolish, and credulous in my infirmities. I am scarcely right-minded, perhaps, — now do not laugh at me, Gerard, for asking you this strange question ; but tell me, and I adjure you solemnly to let your answer be nothing

but the truth — tell me now, has it ever entered into your thoughts, have you ever had the slightest shadow of suspicion, that Michael and Ella Moore might possibly be my long-lost children? I know that I must appear very ridiculous for indulging in such a wild chimæra — but some how or other this idea has possessed me, and foolish as is my question, I implore you to answer. Speak now, as though you were, as indeed you *are*, in the presence of the Most High Judge. You see how calm I am, Gerard — so do not fear that your answer will excite me. Have you ever had the least shadow of a suspicion that Michael and Ella Moore might possibly be my long-lost children?"

Thus invoked, what else could I do but answer, "Yes, Edwin, *I have*."

"You have!" and now Anstruther spoke in a more rapid and less distinct voice, "you have — you confess you have suspected — now tell me, *why* have you suspected?"

"My imagination is very fertile," I answered, "and in my mind a possibility is soon magnified into a probability — a probability into a conviction. The likeness of Ella to your wife, and of Michael to yourself, together with their possession of your miniature does furnish a chain — though a very slender one — a chain of presumptive evidence. Besides this, Michael tells me that he

distinctly remembers in his early childhood a great storm at sea."

"More proof! — more proof! — the light is beginning to dawn upon me, I doubt not but that it will blaze forth anon. Bring them to me, Gerard, for methinks that there is a strong instinct within us which teacheth us to know our own children. If they be mine I doubt not but that I shall know them — bring them to me, or reveal at once all the hidden knowledge, which lies darkly within you, for I am as certain as I am of my own wickedness, that you know much more than you are willing to reveal. Do not be afraid of exciting me — I can bear any thing — any thing that you can tell me. Whatever you say, Gerard, will no more affect me than the wind does a frozen lake."

"Edwin, was the name of the vessel, which went down with your children, the *Emerald*?"

"It was — it was," gasped Anstruther, "how knew you this, Gerard? I told you not — I told you not the name of the vessel."

"No; but I once knew a man, who was on board of it —"

"A man who was on board the *Emerald* when she perished?" asked Anstruther, with an energy which he could not control, for he was in a fever of perilous excitement.

"Yes," I answered, "he was saved. Providence watched over him, and he was saved."

"Alone — escaped he alone?"

"No — not alone — with him a woman and three little children."

"And the woman?"

"Was Mrs. Moore!"

"Merciful God, I thank thee! Then I am not a childless man."

He sunk back with his head upon the pillow, and his hands clasped across his breast. And thus he lay for some minutes supine and motionless; his lips alone moving a little.

I thought that the wretched man was praying, so I did not utter a word.

But presently he turned his face towards me, and said, in a low voice, "You are not making a mock of me, I hope."

"God forbid, Edwin, that I should be so cruel a tormentor. I have with me an affidavit made by this very man. I did not tell you all I knew at once, thinking that it would be too much for you — but I have proof, clear and decisive, beyond all shadow of doubt. Michael and Ella are the children of your loins! Have you strength to listen to what I can read to you — the statements in this paper? I fear that already you are exhausted — you had better try and compose yourself to sleep."

"Sleep, Gerard! Do you think that I could

sleep — with my children — my long-lost children beneath the roof, and I not yet having seen them — not yet having pressed them to my bosom ! No, no — Gerard, read that paper — let me know, beyond all question, that my children are living — prove it to me incontestably, and then bring them to me that I may bless them.”

And in a voice as clear and distinct as I could summon to my assistance, I read the eventful deposition of Paul Phillips to the end.

Anstruther interrupted me not. He turned his face towards me, and it was pale and rigid as white marble ; his eyes were fixed intently upon me ; his lips pressed closely together ; his hands clutched the coverlid of the bed.

He spoke not — he moved not, whilst I read, and when I had done reading, he changed not his position for some minutes, and I thought that he was senseless. But anon he raised his hand to his forehead, and faintly articulated, “Is that all?”

“I have read the deposition to the end.”

“And it is signed — attested upon oath — made before a Justice of the Peace?”

“It is —”

“Then bring me my children,” and the sick man’s voice was loud and exceeding shrill, “bring me my children that I may bless them ! And hark you, Gerard, do not say that I am dying — but send directly for *** and *** and ***, all the first

physicians in London — tell them that I have mines of wealth, and that they shall have all if they can but save me. I must not, I *will* not die yet — to die *now*, oh ! horrible, Gerard — to think that my bark, after braving many tempests, should go down in the very sight of home — God ! merciful God ! for their sakes spare me, I implore you — suffer me yet a little while to live, for *their* sakes, not for my own — they are good and holy, and pure, and innocent, they have not bowed down to idols. I ask as one deserving nothing — but God is merciful, and I am sore-stricken. — Oh ! any thing but this — any thing but death at this moment. I ask but for life — let it be a life of pain, poverty, disease — let me live a leper — only let me live, and I will — fool that I am to think of bargaining with the Most High !

“But why sit you there ?” continued the sick man, raising his voice to a still higher tone, “why sit you there ? do you hear me not ? Bring me my children, Gerard ; I say, bring me my children. For fifteen years I have been as a childless man, and now God has given me back my children. Bring them to me, Gerard ; for my time is short — I cannot spare a minute of this great happiness — the joy of looking upon my children. But hark you, do not say that I am dying — I am not dying — no, no — it is impossible that I should

die at the threshold — the very threshold of my sweet home.”

I left the sick-chamber with a quaking heart, and hurried immediately to my uncle. Rapidly I told him of all that had past between Anstruther and myself. The tears glistened in Mr. Pemberton's eyes, as he said to me, “The father must be obeyed — we can keep him no longer from his children.”

Together my Uncle Pemberton and I went to prepare Michael and Ella for the interview. They were sitting side by side, and Michael was endeavouring to allay the fears of his sister — whispering words of hope into her ear, though his heart misgave him all the time.

My uncle repaired to Anstruther's chamber, desiring us to follow him in a few minutes. He went thither hoping to strengthen the dying man with the sweet medicine of prayer. I sat down beside Ella and said, “Fear not;” but Ella trembled from head to foot. Michael's face too was pale as a spectre's. The few minutes, that we waited below, appeared to us like so many hours.

But at length the time passed, and I led Michael and Ella to the chamber of their dying parent. My hand shook like the hand of one palsey-stricken as I laid it upon the handle of the door.

We entered — Anstruther would have sprung from his bed, but that the strong arm of my uncle restrained him, “My children! my long lost children!” he cried aloud in a shrill voice, “I implore you, not to keep me from my children,” and sitting upright in his bed, he stretched out his lean arms.

Michael and Ella rushed towards the bed, and in a moment they were in the embrace of their father. First one and then the other he kissed with frantic energy. He pressed them to his bosom; then he gazed at them passionately; he laughed, and he wept aloud. Then he kissed them again and again, and passed his fingers through their hair, and ever anon uttered such broken sentences as these.

“My children—my long lost children—my Edwin — yes, your name is Edwin — not Michael — and your name is Mary — yes, Mary — your mother’s name was Mary — and you have your mother’s face. There now, my sweet child — look up, for I would gaze upon your face — you have blue eyes and golden hair like your mother — you are weeping — nay, don’t weep — laugh, laugh as I do — you ought to rejoice for you have found a parent — as I rejoice having found my children, my long-lost, beautiful children. Oh! I am so proud of you — how lovely you are both. We will be so happy, so happy, Edwin. I have a fine

house and beautiful gardens, and we will have such merry-making at the Abbey—we will have bonfires and illuminations, and fire-works—and prayers too, prayers, Mary—thanksgivings, for God is merciful. He has given me back my children, and we must not forget Him—we must not be ungrateful to God. And, Gerard too—where is Gerard?—Mary, you love Gerard—we shall have ‘points and bride-laces’ anon—ha, ha!—we will have such doings at the Abbey—now kiss me, my sweet Mary—and do not hide your beautiful face. Proofs indeed! oaths and affidavits!—you are the very image of the mother—I should have known you any where as my child—the parental instinct is strong.—But speak to me—why are you silent? lift up your voice, Mary—I wish to hear the music of your voice.”

But all that the young maiden could say was “Father!—my dear father!”

“Ah! that voice! I should have known it in a chorus of a thousand—it is the same sweet voice that gladdened me with its music in the summer of my youth. Can you sing, Mary? Your mother used to sing to me, and you shall sing to me—oh! how happy we shall be! But, hark ye, my sweet children, we must not love overmuch. God is a jealous God, and idolatry is a grievous sin—I have a great pain about my heart, and there is something burning me, like a fire, in my

brain — but I am not ill, you must not think that I am ill; I shall live to a good old age, for God has given me back my children, and I am no longer a solitary man. Gerard, give me some wine, you know it is my old medicine, besides, I must drink to my children — you will not — why you think that I am ill — I feel strong as a giant, and I shall come down to dinner to-day.”

But the sick man, though he boasted of his strength, was utterly exhausted, and slowly and faintly his words came forth. He sunk back, with his head upon the pillow, but he still held Ella by the hand. There had been an unnatural brilliancy in his eyes, but now they were dim and glassy; there had been a hectic flush on his cheeks, but now they were utterly hueless. Everything betokened approaching death — the supernatural energy which had supported him was gone, and he now lay weak and powerless upon the bed, scarcely able to uplift his hand.

But still he continued to speak, though his voice was exceedingly low, “I wish that you would give me some wine — I wish that you had given it to me when I asked for it, for I am weak now, very weak for the want of it. My sweet Mary, give me a kiss, and raise those pillows behind me, for I cannot see you whilst I am lying thus — that will do, yet now I can scarcely see you — perhaps it is that my eyes have become dim — come nearer

to me, still nearer, and you Edwin — there now I feel you both—Mr. Pemberton, we must not forget God, it would be well for us all if we prayed.”

* * * * *
* *, * * *

“Can you hear what I am saying?—now, my sweet children, pray do not think that I am dying; I have often been worse than this—much worse before. I have many years to live, and we will be so happy at the Abbey, and Gerard shall live with us—come hither, Gerard, and take Mary’s hand—you love one another; love on, but be warned by my sad fate.—Why do you weep, my children? Ye have come back to me after an absence of fifteen years, and why do you greet me with sobs? God, spare me yet a little while! I feel icy cold—and yet it cannot be death. Kiss me, my children, all of ye, for perhaps I am dying after all. God is just; I deserve it to the full; be sure of that—I deserve it to the full. And yet it is something to have seen you—to have blessed you—to have embraced you—to have felt your kisses on my lips—God! I am grateful for that. Thou art just and merciful, and thou art afraid that I shall sin again as I have sinned in my youth. My beloved ones, be warned—I am suffering for my iniquities—*Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*”

“And yet I am not dying — it cannot be that I am dying with my long-lost children in my arms. My miseries did not kill me ; how then can I die of joy ? Too much happiness kills not — sweet Mary, kiss me again — I feel your cheek against mine ; how soft it is ! and now methinks I see you, for the film has passed away from my eyes, and yet I see you in the darkness — perhaps, it is not you, but your mother. My sweet children, you did not know your mother — oh ! you would have loved her so much — but it has pleased God to keep you from idols. Be sure that all He does is merciful — Gerard, be sure of that — if it pleases God to take me now, it is only an act of mercy — but, perhaps, He will spare me yet a little while. Now why are ye all weeping ? I hear sounds as of many people weeping — I do not weep, but rejoice. Ha, ha ! now laugh all of ye ! for mercy’s sake weep not aloud ; I cannot bear to hear you sobbing. ‘ My children — my beautiful children, I have lands and houses, and money — be happy ; I forgot it till now, and I scarce think that I can write. What does it matter ? Love is everything — love one another ; but hark ye, it is a good thing to love, but you must love God better than one another. I did not, and, therefore, I am dying — *Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*”

He never more spake word — and Michael and Ella were fatherless.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SELFISHNESS OF THE UNSELFISH ONE.

Love's heroism is equal to all acts,
But seldom to forbearance.

HORN.

I HAVE brought my story well nigh to a close, and I fear that the little interest it possessed is almost wholly at an end. But the reader must bear with me yet a little while, whilst I make confession of a miserable error into which I was driven by my too impulsive nature—an error bitterly repented of—an error, which was atoned for by years of wretchedness, and almost crowned with a mortal catastrophe.

They, who have followed my adventures thus far, will scarcely charge me with being selfish by nature ; selfish, assuredly I was not ; but how truly has it been said that the most unselfish people often do the most selfish things.

Anstruther died, and was buried. They buried him in the chapel at Charlton Abbey ; and Michael, for still I must call him by this name,--- Michael was the chief mourner.

They searched for a will. I gave it as my opinion, that Anstruther had died intestate, for I had myself seen him, but a few weeks before his death, destroy the will that he had made in my favour. I was glad of this, for Michael was heir-at-law, and I did not anticipate any difficulty in establishing the legality of his claims.

They searched for a will, and, to my astonishment, they found one. They opened it ; they read it aloud ; and I, Gerard Doveton, was the owner of Charlton Abbey, and the successor to all Anstruther's wealth.

I was amazed, for Anstruther had promised that he would not renew the will that he had, at my instigation, destroyed. I knew not what to think of this. I took the document into my hand, but my brain swam dizzily round, and I could not decipher the characters of the will. I asked, "What is the date of this?" and they told me.

It was of a date anterior to that of the document which Anstruther had burnt. They had found it, after a long search, between the pages of a book; it was regularly signed, and there were many present to attest the authenticity of the hand-writing; nothing could be more clear and satisfactory, than the wording of it; there was a lawyer present, who gave it as his opinion that my title to the property could hardly be disputed by the most vexatious of cavillers.

After a little while I became more collected, and I read the will from beginning to end. I never felt so utterly ashamed of myself as I did, at this moment. I was sinking beneath the weight of my imagined disgrace. I looked around me, and I thought that I beheld a sneer upon the face of every one present. The word "Legacy-hunter," seemed to be ringing in my ears. My head drooped, like the head of a detected criminal; and I longed to hurry away from the gaze of the by-standers, and to rush into utter solitude.

Then I thought of Michael and Ella—that I had cheated them out of their just inheritance, and that now they were destined to be beggars in the world. Michael was present; he sat beside me; he took me by the hand, and he spoke words of congratulation. I thought that

there was, sarcasm in the tones of his voice, and irony in the words that he uttered. I thought that he was covertly reproaching me, and taunting me for the part that I had acted. His very look was a silent malediction. I could not bear it; the load ~~was~~ too heavy for me, and I gasped out "It is a forgery — a forgery!"

All present were thunder-struck by this strange exclamation. Michael laid his hand gently upon my arm, and said, "Gerard, what do you mean?" The old Steward, who had sworn to the handwriting of his master, declared that he was ready to repeat the oath an hundred times over; and the lawyer, looking searchingly into my face, said, "A forgery, Mr. Doveton!—by *whom*?"

"Oh! not by me. I know nothing about it—at least, nothing more than what I will now tell you. Some weeks ago—it was in the month of November, Mr. Austruther hinted to me, that he had made me his heir. I besought him to destroy the will; he hesitated, and I threatened to quit the house instantly, if he did not comply with my wishes. He obeyed; with manifest reluctance he committed the document to the flames; I saw it reduced to ashes—no vestige of it was left—then I elicited a promise from him, that he would never renew the document that he had thus, at my bidding, destroyed. The promise was

given, and I confided in it; but I see, to my bitter mortification, that it has been broken, and that I have been forced into the possession of property, the acceptance of which I have striven most industriously to avoid."

"But this document bears a prior date."

"Ah! true, I forgot, and therefore it is null and void."

"It is the last existing testament; and valid," returned the lawyer, smiling at the false conclusion, into which I had leaped so hastily; "it seems more than probable, that Mr. Anstruther, having mislaid this document, and searched for it in vain, was compelled to make another copy of the will, and that it was the second document that he destroyed."

"Nothing can be clearer, Mr. —."

"And to this accident you are indebted——"

"Indebted to an accident! and do you think, Sir, that I would take advantage of such an accident, and defraud the rightful heirs of their property?—not I, Sir—not if those heirs were strangers to me, and the property far greater than it is. *Indebted to an accident!*—I should loath myself for ever if, sheltering myself behind the letter of the law, I were to commit an outrage upon justice and honour, and become a thief—yes, man of law, a thief! No, Sir—*thus*, and *thus*, and *thus*, I prove to you that I am not so pitiful

a scoundrel," and saying this, I took the will into my hand, and tore it into small pieces, which I threw upon the floor, and stamped upon, with the wild energy of a mad-man.

"Now, Michael—behold your property—you are heir to the Charlton estates.

Michael threw himself into my arms, overcome by the intensity of his feeling, and sobbed like a young child.—

On the following morning they sought me, but found me not. I had left Charlton Abbey, suddenly—and returned to Sir Reginald Euston.

Having acquainted the good Baronet with all that had passed since I quitted Fox Hall, I reminded him of his promise to obtain me an appointment. "Let it be something," said I, "that will take me abroad."

"Abroad!" exclaimed the Baronet, with a gesture of astonishment—"and leave Ella Moore—I mean, Mary Anstruther!"

"It is for this very purpose that I am anxious to leave England."

"Gerard, what can you mean? Have you quarrelled with her? Has she offended you? or, are you mad?"

"Not one of these things, Sir Reginald."

"She surely has not cast you off, Gerard?"

“ Oh ! no—she is as humble in her prosperity as she was of old, in her lowly condition. But I absolve her of her engagements—she is free to choose amongst others. I am not a fit mate for the wealthy Mary Anstruther, though I was for the poor Ella Moore. The rich and the great will court her; amongst these she will doubtless find one more worthy than I am to be her partner through life. Oh ! pleasant, indeed, it was to feel assured of the purity and devotedness of my young affection, when Ella Moore was a simple cottage girl, and the world thought her unfit to be my bride. This delight can no longer be mine.

“ Ella is wealthy, and I am poor. I have nothing to offer her, but my love, which will ever remain unaltered. I have left her—and she is free to choose. I have left her without one word at parting; and it may be, that I shall never see her again. I am not a fortune-hunter, Sir Reginald. I have not been toiling all this time, to prove that Michael and Ella are the children of Mr. Anstruther, for my own sake—no; not because I have looked upon Ella Moore as my affianced bride—neither destroyed I Mr. Anstruther’s will, knowing that through another channel the property would ultimately come to me. No, Sir Reginald; I have been sincere in all my

doings; and nothing that I have done has been for my own sake."

"Who doubts it, Gerard? — not they — not Michael and Ella, I am sure."

"Oh! but I shall suspect myself — and this is far worse than others suspecting me."

"Gerard, Gerard — you must not do this — you will break Mary Anstruther's heart."

"And my own — yet, nevertheless it must be done — for a beggar cannot well go courting an heiress, and I think it would be cruel, Sir Reginald, to remind Ella of any absurd expressions of affection, which she chanced to let fall when she was a little girl, and a cottager, having never received kindnesses from others, and thinking in her ignorance of humanity that I was the most glorious creature in the universe. Now she will go into the world and find herself mistaken — she will see others far above me in all that adorns mankind — she will see others whom she will admire — she will respect more — she will love more, and shall I —"

"Nay, Gerard, you are ungenerous at the very moment when you think that you are exhibiting your generosity. I tell you, and I speak seriously, that you are about to do a most selfish action, and the main-spring thereof is pride."

"Then you will not aid me?" I said, petulantly.

"Yes; Gerard — I have promised so to do, and

I will keep my promise ; but what is it that you want ?”

“ Could you procure me a diplomatic appointment ?”

“ Perhaps —”

“ I should like to go abroad as attaché to some embassy. I care not whither I go, as long as I leave England.”

“ Oh ! remain at home, Gerard ; you know not what you are doing — you will destroy your own happiness, and that of her whom you most love.”

“ I am not yet old enough to marry.”

“ That is true.”

“ And ’tis a good thing — an excellent thing for young men to travel.”

“ But renew your vows to Mary ere you go.”

“ Let me be absent a little while,” said I, “ let me go abroad, if only for a year or two. When I return peradventure I shall not be a beggar — I may haply be on the high-road to fortune. Then I will enter the lists against others and begin the work of courtship anew.”

“ You talk like a madman, Gerard ; the young maiden’s heart is yours, and will be whether you marry her or not. As to the other matter, a year or two of travel will not injure you ; but return to Mary, and tell her of your plans, and ask her acquiescence ; for a young gentleman engaged can do nothing without the sanction of his mistress.”

But I was obstinate. I thought that I was acting aright, and the arguments of the good baronet were unavailing to save me from the pitfalls of error. I fell — a self-torturer I tortured others. It was indeed a grievous mistake, but I paid the penance of it throughout months — nay, indeed throughout years — of suffering.

I went to Petersburg as an attaché to the suite of the Ambassador. I wrote to Mary Anstruther before I went; told her that she was absolved from all her promises, and entreated her to think of me as one no longer in the land of the living. “

She did — but she was faithful to my memory — a widowed heart mourning for its buried love, and like Marianna in the poem,

She only said, “ My life is dreary ;

He cometh not,” she said.

She said, “ I am weary — I am weary ;

I would that I were dead !”

CHAPTER XX.

THE DROP-CURTAIN.

All yet seems well; and if it ends so meet,
The bitter past, more welcome is the sweet."

SHAKESPEARE.

YET not thus shall my history end —

Again in my native country — again in my uncle's house — again sitting beside Ella Moore — behold me, reader, two years having passed since last you heard of me — two years of sorrow and repentance.

Ella Moore — yet now, methinks, I ought to write *Mary Anstruther* — is on a visit to her dear friend Emily Pemberton. It is plain that sickness and sorrow have of late been her portion,

for her face is pale, and her frame is attenuated ; but she is lovely as in the days of her health and tranquillity, ere the canker-worm had eaten into her heart.

“ And will you forgive me, Mary ? ” I asked looking into her face with tearful eyes, and an expression of penitent entreaty. “ I have erred, nay, I have sinned grievously ; but you are kind and good, and you will forgive me — I know that you will forgive me, my Mary.”

“ Oh ! Gerard, I am too happy now to utter one word of reproach. I almost think that the present joy atones for the past anguish. You will not leave us again, Gerard — you must not leave us again.”

“ I will *never* leave you again, sweetest, without your permission — a permission which, methinks, I shall never ask. Will you make a like promise, my Mary ? Ah ! that look — I have seen it once — I know how to interpret that look — you *will* promise ! Then henceforth Mary we will be separable only by death.”

Mary spake not ; she put her little hand into mine, and laid her head upon my shoulder. I twined my arms around her ; I pressed her to my bosom ; I kissed her again and again. I was so purely happy — Day after day passed by us and saw no diminution of our happiness — no diminution of our love. I was no longer a beggar with-

out prospects — I was on the high-road to fortune and to fame. The Ambassador, to whose suite I had been attached was now in England, and a Minister of State. I had found favour in his sight, and he had made me his private secretary.

Michael was at Oxford. He had found little difficulty in establishing his claims to the Anstruther estates. They had been opposed by a distant relative of the deceased, but the opposition had been over-ruled. I have no little pleasure in stating, that my friend John Smith took part in the legal proceedings, as junior counsel in behalf of Michael and Ella, and that he acquitted himself in a manner “creditable to himself, and satisfactory to his employers.” When I heard of this I did not fail to remind him that he had once said to me, “If ever you give me a brief when I am called to the bar, give me a better case than this, or never employ me as your counsel.”

Few things afforded me more pleasure in a small way than laughing at the man of sense. The joke was generally against me; when it was in my favour, I made the most of it.

Sir Reginald, or perhaps I ought to say Lady Euston, had presented Lawrence Moore with a cornetcy in a cavalry regiment, and in a little time after this, Michael — or rather Edwin Anstruther — purchased for his foster-brother a lieutenancy.

Little Beau-pied was at school. They called

her Emma Jones, but none ever knew her proper title. She spent her holidays at the rectory, and I know not that she ever yearned after kindred. They told me that she was an apt scholar, and she sang like a young syren. In process of time she became Mrs. Lawrence Moore.

I have said that Michael was at Oxford. Ella and I looked forward with throbbing hearts to the approaching vacation, as we had agreed to postpone our nuptials till that season. The season arrived. My uncle Pemberton performed the ceremony. Sir Reginald Euston gave away the bride. My cousin Emily was one of the bridesmaids, and I thought that it would not be very long before *she* would stand at the altar as a bride.

All my family came up from Devonshire to be present at the ceremony. The Miss Dovetons were the Miss Dovetons still. Arthur was in the "upper remove;" he had grown very plain, and he wore a tail-coat. Walter, I am sorry to say, was not yet entitled to be denominated "the captain."

John Smith was at the wedding. He rejoiced, unaffectedly, in my good fortune; and as I talked over the adventures of my life, he said to me, "In this your romance I have been a spectator, but in nowise an actor. I have watched your goings on, but had no share in your adventures. I have been as a sort of chorus to your drama—

every now and then making my comments, but never mingling in the business of the scene."

And now I have done — yet, stay ; for I have hinted my suspicions that Emily Pemberton would soon be a wife — and she is one. There are fine merry-makings at Charlton Abbey, such as have not been seen there for years. The young squire has brought home his young bride, and a more beautiful couple have seldom been welcomed by the huzzas of a kind-hearted tenantry. And who is she who sits smiling beside the young lord of Charlton Abbey — whose bright, beaming face is that looking out of the carriage-window ? It is the face of my cousin Emily.

And now Reader, I have brought my history fairly to a conclusion. I once intended to have explained to you the meaning of it ; but I leave it, without comment, to its fate. Some, I doubt not, will dive deeper than the surface ; but they will be few, very few indeed ; for there are not many who, like Gerard Doveton, "behold qualities not persons, wide principles and not narrow details." And least of all in the pages of a romance does the world strive to burrow after wisdom. I almost fear I have spoken in parables to no purpose. The age of allegory is at an end.

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